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# Contest winners get close to nature

SHARIFAH ARFAH

**A** NATURE camp is the perfect weekend getaway for Coca-Cola Water Vision 2010 contest winners to unwind and get closer to Mother Earth.

The students and the teacher-advisers of champion school SMK St Michael in Penampang, Sabah; first runner-up SMK Kidurong in Bintulu, Sarawak; and second runner-up SMK Infant Jesus in Johor Baru, Johor went for a canopy walk, night walks and river excursions at Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) in Kepong, Selangor.

They were also treated to fun barbecue dinners under the stars and a visit to Kuala Kubu Baru Dam.

Organised by Malaysian Nature Society in partnership with Coca-Cola,

the competition required teams comprising four students supervised by a teacher to submit an original 15-minute multimedia presentation in either Bahasa Malaysia or English

on the theme Water Conservation Issues Near You.

Coca Cola Water Vision 2010 marks the second win for SMK St Michael and the second participation of teacher Jennifer Asing and student Myra Buhavan Busing.

This year, the team from St Michael highlighted the effects of the polluted Putaton-Kibambangan river on the local community.

"We organised a mass clean-up of the river with those living nearby. We also planted saplings along the river to reduce soil erosion

on its banks, and released 300 fingerlings into the river so that the fish population can multiply," says Asing on their recent effort.

Busing says she is extremely happy that her second try also resulted in a first-place win.

"We thought we would not get any placing because we sent in our entry just two days before the closing date," says the fifth-former.

"I intend to share the winning video with other students in my school. I

hope it will motivate them to care for the environment and take part in future Coca-Cola Water Vision contests," adds Busing.

Each student from the St Michael team received an 8GB iPod Touch while the school received RM1,000 for

nature-related activities.

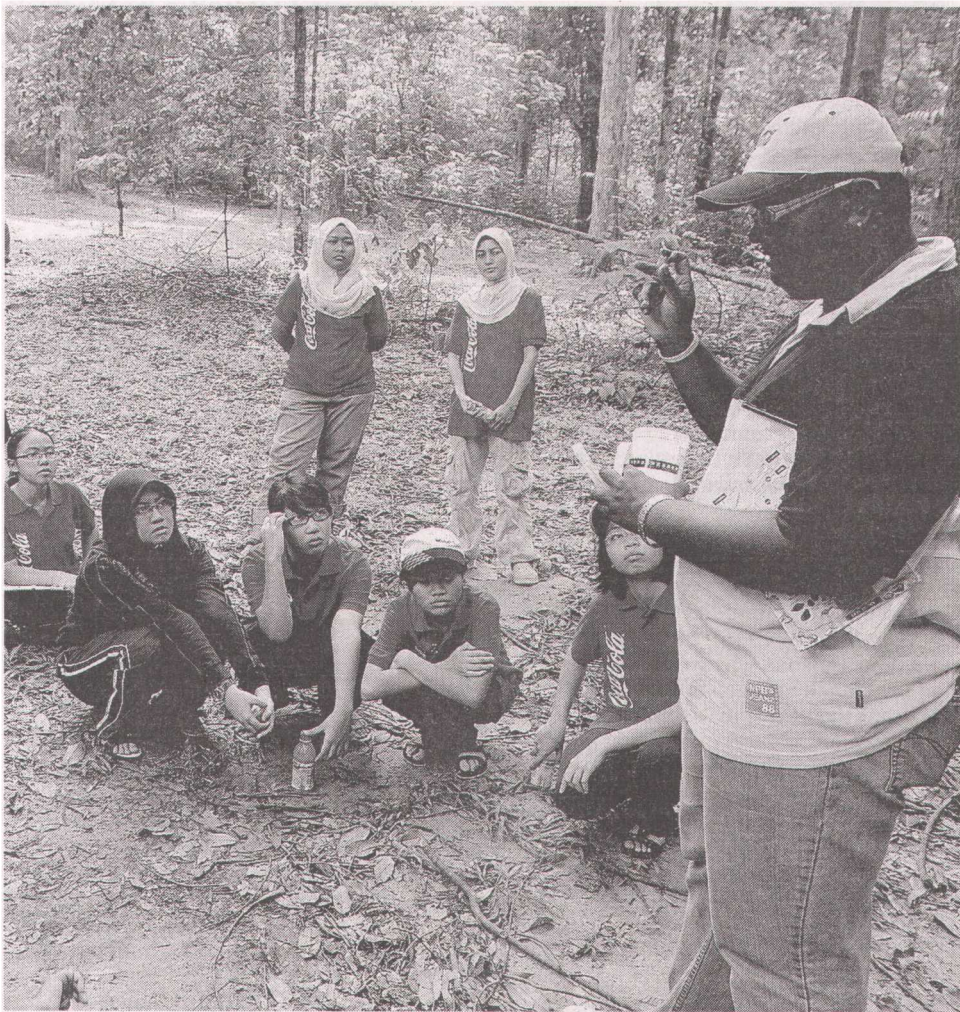
SMK Kidurong team members won RM1,250. The school's nature club received RM750. SMK Infant Jesus received RM500 for the team and RM500 for its club.

Now in its fifth year, the Water Vision competition aims to nurture a sense of responsibility in youth to conserve the environment. This year's competition attracted 45 entries from 11 states nationwide.

Malaysian Nature Society head of environmental education division I. S. Shanmugaraj says: "We will compile the videos of the top three winners from the past five years in a disc. We intend to distribute it to schools which have nature clubs."

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Malaysian Nature Society programme officer S.P. Maichal Isthyben (right) advises students on the important aspects of their river excursion at FRIM