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MAHATHIR VISITS DERAMAKOT FOREST RESERVE

SANDAKAN, Aug 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today spent more than two hours at the Deramakot Forest Reserve, deep in the jungle about 200km from here, which is introducing the "skyline yarding system" of harvesting timber.

Upon arrival by an air force helicopter, Dr Mahathir was received by the Sandakan chief forestry officer, Sam Mannan who later gave a closed-door briefing to the Prime Minister.

Accompanying Dr Mahathir were Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee, Federal Land and Cooperative Development Minister Datuk Osu Sukam, Minister in the Prime Minister Department Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and most of the state cabinet members.

After the briefing, the Prime Minister, who is on a two-day visit to Sabah, proceeded to see the skyline yarding system which involved cables to retrieve logs from the ground in order to minimise disturbance to the soil and other vegetation.

He also witnessed the Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) in the vicinity, which among others, used crawler tractors and bulldozers to pull felled timbers from deep in the jungle.

This method had been proven to cause little soil erosion and damage to residual trees.

The Prime Minister was also briefed at the site by forestry officers as well as German experts who are assisting in the implementation of the skyline yarding system in Sabah.

Dr Mahathir also planted a tree to mark his visit at the remote centre just before returning here to attend a Sandakan Barisan Nasional dinner. --
Bernama

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