

More Sarawak land for oil palm 6

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KUCHING: Sarawakians can help to speed up development by actively taking part in land development, said Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud.

The state is opening up large tracts of native customary rights (NCR) land for oil palm estates through joint ventures between landowners and established plantation companies.

There are about 1.5 million hectares of NCR land which largely remain under-developed or are left idle.

The state has started pilot projects to develop NCR land into oil palm plantations in Kanowit and Baram.

Taib said the people should support the Government in the implementation of the national economic recovery plan to put the country on the right economic path.

He said the measures made in the plan were showing results.

In a Christmas message, he called for the people's backing for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in handling the country's political situation and to fight the evil intentions of financial speculators who were bent on destabilising the country.

"Let us concentrate our efforts and manpower resources by continuously working close-

ly, sacrificing ourselves to combat and destroy the evil influences strategised by irresponsible elements from inside and outside to destabilise our nation."

Taib said the struggle for stability, harmony and progress could only be achieved if all Malaysians were fully committed and united to the-cause.

In a similar message, Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Haji Ahmad Zaidi Aduce Muhammed Noor said the gap in development and living standard of the rural and urban communities could only be reduced if there was a balance in economic growth and the distribution of wealth.