

# PM: People have the power to save environment

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**PENANG:** Say no to a tree-less and dirty environment - this is the Prime Minister's advice to the people.

He said the people had the power to compel developers and hawkers to be environment-friendly.

"The *rakyat* have a choice not to buy houses in housing estates where devel-

opers cut down all the trees. Why live in such an uncomfortable environment?" he said when opening the Environment Awareness Campaign 2007 at the Queensbay Mall here yesterday.

Abdullah also urged the people to shun dirty eateries.

Failure to take care of the environment could also pose a major setback to the tourism sector, Abdullah warned.

He said an investor had rejected

plans to build a hotel in Pantai Pasir Gemuruh near Teluk Kumbar in Penang because the place was dirty.

"This particular beach used to be clean, and beautiful. But now it is full of rubbish," he said.

Later during a press conference, he said 50% of the rivers in the country were polluted, of which 5% were extremely polluted.

"There are no more waterfalls in

Penang. Sungai Kelang is filthy and mining ponds in Batu Pahat, Johor are filled with garbage.

"On my way here from the airport, the road was littered with durian husks and rambutan waste," he said, adding that these marred the landscape and reflected the local attitude.

He also called on the public to observe cleanliness inside and outside

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## Rivers at risk from illegal logging

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their homes.

"Do not throw garbage into drains. This will clog the drainage system.

"The recent massive floods in Johor cost the Government RM1bil to repair the damaged infrastructures. We could have used that money to build schools and hospitals," he said.

He also called for greater enforcement to check illegal logging.

"Illegal logging destroys the environment including rivers," he said, noting that natural freshwater fish habitat had been mostly destroyed.

Abdullah said the onus was on the public to keep the environment clean.

"I want this campaign to be a success, it is important for our future," he said.

Earlier in his welcoming speech, Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid said it was time people dropped the "*tidak apa*" (never mind) attitude to safeguard the world from further environmental degradation. //