

PM: Learn to conserve energy the Japanese way

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wants Malaysians to emulate the Japanese in finding ways to conserve energy.

They should also adopt alternative sources of energy such as solar power for everyday use.

"It really depends on us to find energy conserving methods. We should not waste.

"Just because we earn a lot more, this doesn't mean that we have to spend more. It would be a huge saving for us," Abdullah said at a media conference at the end of his five-day visit to Japan.

Energy-conserving products for household use, such as bulbs, were already available in the market.

"It costs a little more but in the long run, you save on energy utilisation."

He said that although Malaysia was a tropical country, its people lived in temperate conditions.

"We live in an air-conditioned environment. Our cars are air-



conditioned. We have air-conditioning in the office, when we eat at restaurants or when we watch movies.

"If you play golf, only then do you go out in the open," he said.

Centralised air-conditioning in buildings made energy use even less efficient.

"So, if the chief executive officer of the company decides to come to work on weekends, you literally have to switch on the air-conditioning for the entire building. This is not good," he said.

Abdullah advocated the extensive use of renewable solar energy as was the case in Japan.

Relating his own personal ob-

servation while on his way from the Kansai International Airport to the hotel in the city, he said the street lamps there were solar powered.

"I can see the panels in between the street lamps. At the top of the street lamps are these little fans."

During his meeting with Japanese premier Shinzo Abe, Abdullah said they had discussed efforts to fight global warming and achieve a "cool earth" by 2050.

Abe said he would give priority to any issue with regard to the environment.

"We want to work with Japan on this, especially on the fight against global warming. We have to wait for specifics from the Japanese government on this as we want to be an active player as well."

His discussions with Abe also touched on getting Japanese investors into Malaysia, especially in industries that use high technology.

Concerned with the spate of fa-

tal accidents involving motorcyclists, Abdullah also suggested following the Japanese example of installing safety bars on the sides of heavy vehicles.

"When accidents happen, the bars will prevent the motorcyclists from going under the vehicles. I'm going to meet (Transport Minister) Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy on this," he said.

Abdullah had noticed the safety bars on the sides of lorries while travelling here.

Asked if it would be necessary to enforce the installation of the safety bars, Abdullah said, "Yes, I think so."

Later, when meeting Malaysian students studying here, Abdullah instilled in them the need to study hard and return home to serve the country.

"Don't think only of yourself," he said.

"We have a function in society. Life becomes more meaningful if we contribute to the country."