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# Abdullah: Recycling can help save resources

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**PUTRAJAYA:** Malaysians' lukewarm response to recycling has left the prime minister dismayed.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said it was sad that the country continued producing 25,600 tonnes of waste a day, with a projected increase of 3.6 per cent each year.

At that rate, Abdullah warned that landfills nationwide would be at full capacity by 2020.

Recalling the National Recycling Day he launched in 2003, Abdullah said not much had been done since then.

The country's recycling rate is at a mere five per cent compared with the 30 to 40 per cent registered in developed nations.

However, he noted that the condition of rivers in the country had improved with the proportion of clean rivers increasing from 28.3 per cent in 2000 to 55 per cent last year.

Calling on the private sector to take responsibility for the impact of its business activities on the environment, Abdullah said such a corporate social mission could help protect the country's resources.

"It is not enough to donate money to charities and orphanages, or to donate computers to schools. Companies need to take ownership of the impact of their activities on the environment.

"Farms should monitor the use of pesticides and fertilisers, manufacturers must ensure their effluents are properly treated before release to the environment, construction companies should ensure minimal soil erosion.

"The impact of the private sector on the environment is large and pervasive.

"Imagine the amount of resources that can be saved if they are committed to recycling."

Abdullah said Malaysians had a lot to do to bring the environment back to a level they could be proud of.

The Malaysian quality of life report, he said, had highlighted that the local environment index deteriorated from 100.2 in 2000 to 99.67 in 2004.

"We, therefore, need to take steps to address the myriad issues relating to the environment, and go beyond mere lip service to actual action and execution."

Abdullah said this in a speech read by Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop at



Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop presenting the 2006/2007 Prime Minister's Hibiscus Awards challenge trophy to Datuk Anuar Ahmad, vice-president of Petronas Oil Business, for Petronas Penapisan Melaka Sdn Bhd, last night.

the presentation of the 2006/2007 Prime Minister's Hibiscus Awards last night.

Petronas Penapisan Melaka Sdn Bhd walked away with the challenge trophy after topping the list of Exceptional Achievement Award winners.

The other Exceptional Award winners were Shell MDS (M) Sdn Bhd, Intel Products (M) Sdn Bhd and Tex Cycle Sdn Bhd, which also

won the SME category.

The state awards were presented to Shell Refining Co (FOM) Bhd (Negri Sembilan), BASF Petronas (Pahang); Irtel Technology (M) Sdn Bhd (Penang); Shangri La's Tanjung Aru Resort (Sabah); Shell MDS (Sarawak); Tex Cycle (Selangor) and Ethylene/Polyethylene (M) Sdn Bhd (Terengganu).

A record 59 companies participated in the competition.