

Malaysia has political will to preserve forests

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DERAMAKOT (Sabah): Malaysia has the political will to preserve its tropical forests and bio-diversity through sustainable forest management.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Federal and state governments were committed in preserving the forests as well as flora and fauna for their medicinal and herbal values.

Abdullah, who flew to the Deramakot forest reserve from Sandakan, said the reserve was a fine example of the political will of the Federal and state governments to keep the forests for future generations.

He said he agreed with Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Musa Aman on what needed to be done to safeguard forest biodiversity.

"When Musa rejected logging

permit applications, loggers came to me. I told them that if the CM says no, then I say no," he said.

Sabah Forestry Department director Sam Mannan briefed Abdullah on the history of Sabah's forests and the pressures they faced over timber licences.

Abdullah, who spent about three hours touring the facilities in Deramakot, later witnessed the handing over of cheques totalling US\$100,000 (RM360,000) from New York-based Alexander Abraham Foundation director Nancy Abraham to Mannan. TSH Resources Bhd chairman Datuk Kalimullah Hassan gave RM330,000.

The money is meant for sustainable forest management.



GREEN ATLAS: Abdullah looking at a map of the Sabah forest reserve during his visit to Deramakot in Sabah yesterday.