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SIARAN MEDIA

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SABAH ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST (SET) WORKING IN TANDEM WITH YAYASAN SABAH GROUP TO PROTECT AND MANAGE DANUM VALLEY-MALIAU BASIN-IMBAK CANYON (DaMal) RAINFOREST COMPLEX

KOTA KINABALU (Friday): The Sabah Environmental Trust (SET) is working together with Yayasan Sabah Group in the protection and management of the Danum Valley-Maliau Basin-Imbak Canyon (DaMal) Rainforest Complex.

On 30 April 2021, Yayasan Sabah Group received six All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) units from the Sabah Environmental Trust (SET) to be used at Yayasan Sabah Group's three conservation areas namely Danum Valley, Maliau Basin and Imbak Canyon.

The sponsorship of the ATVs was made possible from funds made available by the March Conservation Foundation (MCF) and the overall Initiative supported by the Global Conservation (GC) of the United States.

The vehicles were handed over by the Chief Executive Officer of SET, Dr. Rahimatsah Amat, to the Director of Yayasan Sabah, Datuk Haji Gulamhaidar @ Yusof bin Khan Bahadar. Also in attendance were SET Trustee, Datuk Haji Adnan Puteh and Yayasan Sabah Group's Management.

In expressing his appreciation, Datuk Haji Gulamhaidar said, "We are thankful for the vehicle donation. As the name implies, ATVs are designed to handle a wider variety of terrain than most other vehicles, thus enabling Yayasan Sabah Group to conduct substantial intensive and extensive patrolling activities in our conservation areas."

"Each conservation area is allocated with two units of ATV which comes fully equipped with the latest technology in aiding patrolling activities deep inside our conservation areas while improving communication in preventing poaching activities," he said.

In his reciprocal response, Dr. Rahimatsah commented, "Since October 2017, SET has been collaborating on an initiative entitled the Danum Valley-Maliau Basin-Imbak Canyon (DaMal): Patrolling (Enforcement & Monitoring) Initiative with Yayasan Sabah Group and the Sabah Forestry Department."

"This initiative was established under the MoU agreement signed on 24 October 2017 between the Sabah State Government (through Sabah Forestry Department), SET, and Yayasan Sabah Group to focus on strengthening the protection and management of the Danum Valley, Maliau Basin and Imbak Canyon rainforest network in Sabah. Part of the initiatives started under the MoU is to enhance the team capacity through the Global Park Defence (GPD) deployment, a global conservation initiative," he explained.

Apart from the ATVs and other equipment, SET has distributed more than 150 units of wildlife and cellular camera traps, boats equipped with the engine for riverine monitoring and three units of 4WD for mobile patrols to help in monitoring work in the DaMal Rainforest Complex. Ensuring that the rangers have the necessary skills to uphold the introduced Global Park Defense system under the initiative, capacity building programmes were provided, including sponsorship for the rangers under the DaMal Patrol Team to undergo attachment in Aceh, Sumatra.

"Under the MoU, SET function as a local donor responsible for supporting the DaMal Initiative. And today's ATV handing-over is testimony towards achieving that very end," he added.

In addition, SET is contributing to an 18-month study on Bornean Elephant and Bornean Banteng that will be conducted in the Maliau Basin Conservation Area (MBCA). In supporting the study, a total of 50 units of camera trap (complete with security casing, python locking cables, SD cards, solar panel and batteries) plus Global Positioning System (GPS), mobile phone for the SMART Mobile, and camera are handed to Yayasan Sabah Group.

The study's overall goal is to establish wildlife baseline data for the two iconic species in MBCA by building the capacity of MBCA staff. It will be led by a principal investigator to determine the population, abundance, body conditions of the two species and establish suitable artificial salt licks that can be developed in the future as visitors' attraction.

Fund for the species study was obtained from People vs Extinction from the state of Delaware, USA. The study acts to complement the ongoing efforts to address poaching and encroachment in DaMal Rainforest Complex under an MOU titled DaMal Initiative – Patrolling (Enforcement and Monitoring) in DaMal Rainforest Complex.



PIX 1: Datuk Haji Gulamhaidar @ Yusof bin Khan Bahadar (standing, centre-left) receiving the ATV and cellular camera trap from Dr. Rahimatsah (standing, centre-right), witnessed by Datuk Haji Adnan Puteh (Centre), Management and staff of Yayasan Sabah Group.



PIX 2: Datuk Haji Gulamgani @ Yusof bin Khan Bahadar (seated) having a go with one of the ATV. Also in the picture are Dr. Rahimatsah (left), Datuk Haji Adnan Puteh (Second from right) and Yayasan Sabah Group's Management.

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