

Headline : Belum can draw quality tourists  
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# 'Belum can draw quality tourists'

**ECO-TOURISM:** Najib says rainforest has potential to become Unesco Heritage Site

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**T**HE 130 million-year-old Belum-Temenggor Rainforest has all the uniqueness and potential to be recognised as a Unesco World Heritage Site, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday.

Najib, in commending efforts by state government agencies, non-governmental organisations and the private sector to develop the area in a sustainable manner, said this would ensure the 300,000ha rainforest gets its place on the world eco-tourism map.

He said if the Unesco recognition was attained, the rainforest would not only become a premier heritage destination but also contribute to the country's economy.

"With the recognition, not only can we expect more tourists coming here but we will ensure that they are quality tourists and not mass tourists," Najib said when launching the second phase of the Belum Rainforest Resort on Band-

ing island here.

Present were his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Works Minister Datuk Fadillah Yusof, Armed Forces chief General Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin and Emkay Group chairman Tan Sri Dr Mustapha Kamal Abu Bakar.

Emkay Group, the developer of the resort, has spent more than RM100 million since 2004 on the development of the island, including the Belum Rainforest Resort, a research centre, and on preservation and conservation activities.

The Federal Government's allocation of RM2.5 million has been utilised to build dormitories for the research centre.

Najib yesterday promised more allocations would be given to Emkay Foundation.

Najib said the rainforest evoked nostalgia in him because his late father Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, who was the country's second prime minister, opened the Temenggor Dam in 1974.

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