

Tokiko visits Kg Dagat

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KOTA KINABALU: Special Envoy for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Ms. Tokiko Kato, who is an accomplished Japanese female singer with more than 40 years in the industry, recently visited Kg Dagat near Lower Segama Wildlife Reserve.

She was accompanied by Borneo Biodiversity and Ecosystem Conservation (BBEC) programme Japanese Expert, Dr. Toshinori Tsubouchi dispatched by Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Tokiko was appointed as a special representative to visit environmental protection and conservation activities that take place at the grassroots level in the Asia Pacific region, and to encourage those who are involved as well as to publicise these activities.

Kg Dagat was established as an ecotourism site under the assistance of BBEC programme to conserve nature continually together with the local population.

Through the 'homestay programme', Tokiko attended a handicraft lesson and experienced prawn fishing and shell hunting.

During her final night at the village, she got the opportunity to sing "nature songs" with the villagers.

Tokiko also visited the Sepilok Orang-Utan rehabilitation centre and the Japanese Cemetery in Sandakan.

BBEC is a technical programme as a result of the cooperation between the Sabah State Government, Universiti Malaysia Sabah and JICA. It had started in February 2002.

Its steering committee is chaired by the State Secretary Datuk K. Y. Mustafa. The aim of the programme is to establish a comprehensive and sustainable conservation approach of biodiversity and ecosystems in Sabah.

This aim will be achieved through the four components which are Research and Education, Park Management, Habitat Management and Public Awareness Component. BBEC Programme will be carried out for a period of five years until January 2007.

SMILE...Tokiko and Kg Dagat residents pose for a group photo.



JOY THROUGH MUSIC...Tokiko plays a number for the village elders.



THAT'S HOW YOU DO IT...Tokiko gets a lesson on how to weave a thatched roof.