

Striking balance between peat swamp & development

Malaysian Agong arrives today on 3-day State Visit

HIS Majesty Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Alhaj Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah will be making a three-day State Visit to Brunei Darussalam beginning today.

This would be His Majesty's first State Visit outside of Malaysia after being installed as the XIV Yang di-Pertuan Agong on April 11, Malaysia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release.

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Brunei learning how to manage peat swamp better, says minister

| SITI HAJAR |

THE Ministry of Development will be making peat swamp management as "one of the priorities" in national development, according to the minister yesterday on the sidelines of the Second Ministerial Steering Committee Forum, which is currently being held in Brunei Darussalam.

In an interview with the Borneo Bulletin, Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Suyoi bin Haji Osman, the Minister of Development, said that the forum, which has gathered several Asean partners including Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and

Thailand, will provide opportunities for the ministry to "pick up some ideas on how we can actually manage our peat swamp better" considering the challenges that come with the responsibility.

"It isn't easy to develop as peat swamps can easily catch fire and once that starts it remains underground and we have to find a way to prevent that," he explained.

Scientifically, peat swamps have a high carbon content that can burn under low moisture conditions and, once ignited by the presence of a heat source, peat swamps typically smoulder and can burn undetected for a long period of time.

If left unmonitored, peat swamp fires can have significant economic, social and ecological impacts and reports have indicated that tropical peat swamp fires in Southeast Asia, either due to human intervention and even natural dry spells, is one of the main sources of global warming.

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