



Biotech master plan for Pahang soon

KUANTAN: The Pahang Government will have a biotechnology and biodiversity master plan for the state within three months.

Menri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said the master plan would include ways to protect and preserve the state's rich and diversified natural resources and to attract local and foreign scientists to conduct research here.

"We hope to reap financial benefits from the implementation of the master plan," he told reporters after opening a one-day seminar, *Commercialisation of Biotechnology: Opportunities, Challenges and Technologies,*

here yesterday.

"At the same time, a good partnership must be formed to protect our natural resources and the findings of local researchers."

Adnan said the state government and the researchers should form an equal partnership to help avoid any misunderstandings or differences that might arise from the findings.

"Pahang has about 12,000 types of flowering plants and 1,500 types of ferns," he said, adding that some of these plants, such as *kacip fatimah* and *tongkat ali*, could be ex-

ploited commercially.

"Others are also known to have the therapeutic value and are used to treat diabetes and hypertension."

"In view of this, we don't want to be held ransom by partners or outsiders who have come up with something that has commercial value."

Adnan commended Universiti College of Engineering and Technology Malaysia (Kuktem) for organising the seminar, and hoped that such events could be held more often, as there were many issues that needed to be addressed by experts in

the field.

"The state government also plans to strike a strategic alliance with Kuktem in a move to turn activities related to biotechnology and biodiversity into commercial ventures," he added.

In his opening speech, Adnan said Pahang was known for its natural resources and the state government would ensure that the flora and fauna were protected.

He urged scientists investigating the medicinal properties of plants here to come up with findings that could help create new vaccines.