

Tuesday April 1, 2008

Japanese mountaineer returns to document paths he took in 1975

KOTA KINABALU: Way back in 1975, a Japanese mountaineer used several unknown routes to scale Mount Kinabalu, South-East Asia's highest summit.

While most mountaineers would be proud of such an achievement, it is not so with Tsutsumi Nobuo who.

He felt that, in scaling the mountain, he may have forgotten something more important – to name and document the routes he took 33 years ago when he reached the world heritage site's highest peak, Low's Peak.

This may be one of the reasons the man is back on a mission.

Tsutsumi, now 57, wants to revisit his old climbing playground to complete his mission to promote the world heritage site in the eyes of the mountaineering fraternity.



Awesome: Tsutsumi viewing photos of his Mount Kinabalu expedition in Kota Kinabalu recently.

Tsutsumi is also here to try the Mountain Torq Via Ferrata, a mountain path (*via ferrata* is Italian for iron road) opened on Dec 15, last year, and certified by the *Malaysia Book of Records*, as the world's highest and Asia's first iron road on Mount Kinabalu.

"I am happy to be here again. Mount Kinabalu has a lot of potential to attract rock climbers from all over the world. However, its potential is not fully documented," he told reporters here recently.

"Some attractions of the world heritage site are not popular among rock climbers. I think the unpopular (unknown) routes will attract more climbers," he said.

According to Tsutsumi, his mission was to identify the unknown routes he took in 1975, name them and

compile a document, which might prove useful to promote Mount Kinabalu.

Tsutsumi, who has climbed other mountains in the world including Mount Everest, said he scaled an unexplored gully on Mount Kinabalu known as Commando Cauldron in 1984.

The 400m gully is located on the right of Low's Gully between Tunku Abdul Rahman peak and an unnamed peak down Donkey's Ears.

Tsutsumi, who is president of Rope Rescue Association of Japan, said he and two other Japanese climbers failed to descend into the 1.2km Low's Gully and had to stop at Commando Cauldron due to weather factors.
– Bernama