

TARIKH	SELASA, 8 OKTOBER 2024
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## REACTIVATE IDLE ESTATES

# Johari: Reclaim status as top rubber producer

**BALING:** Malaysia must reclaim its position as one of the world's leading producers of sustainable natural rubber, said Plantation and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani.

"We were once the world's largest rubber producer, generating one million tonnes of rubber," he said after launching the Malaysian Sustainable Natural Rubber (MSNR) guidelines.

"However, production has dropped to 380,000 tonnes. The country has to import RM6 billion worth of rubber to meet domestic demand."

Malaysia's rubber exports to global markets last year totalled over RM37 billion, with RM3.2 billion directed to Europe.

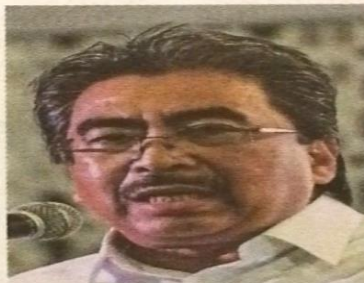
Over the years, he said, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam had overtaken Malaysia as rubber producers.

Johari said Malaysia could reemerge as a leading rubber producer if it optimised its 1.1 million hectares of rubber plantations, which included idle estates.

Johari said he had directed the Malaysian Rubber Board (MRB) to engage rubber smallholders and plantation owners who had abandoned their estates.

"When we ask them (to resume operations), they cite reasons such as age, high maintenance costs and low rubber prices."

He said the ministry, along with MRB and the Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority, will explore ways to reactivate the idle plantations with the consent of the landowners.



*Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani*

"If they agree to cooperate, we will hire workers to tap the rubber trees on their land to boost production, and they will receive a portion of the profits."

He said increased production would reduce dependence on imported natural rubber.

He also announced that enforcement of the MSNR guidelines will begin on Jan 1.

He said MRB licence and permit holders must comply with standard operating procedures to receive MSNR certification from the relevant agencies.

He said MSNR focuses on five key sustainability principles, which are no deforestation for rubber planting, adherence to the National Land Code, environmental sustainability, social compliance and supply chain traceability.

"One of the main global issues facing the rubber industry is

the lack of traceability in raw materials. However, MRB has established a traceability system across upstream, midstream and downstream sectors, which will position Malaysia as a leader in sustainable natural rubber production and products.

"Recognising the challenge posed by the European Union's Deforestation Regulation, the implementation of MSNR is seen as crucial in maintaining Malaysia's 10 per cent rubber market share, with natural rubber exports to the EU valued at RM636.81 million."

Johari said Malaysia's rubber products held a 16 per cent market share in the EU, valued at RM3.235 billion.

DISEDIAKAN  
OLEH

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