



KERATAN AKHBAR

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State rights not affected by forestry policy

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Forestry Policy does not limit the rights of states to take action concerning forest management as stipulated by the objectives and provisions of the policy.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah explained that the policy was complementary, and does not reduce the provisions in any other policy on forest management still in force.

"Forest management in the country is under the purview of state governments and has been enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

"Each state has the power to manage forestry in their respective states," he told Bernama when appearing as a guest on the *Ruang Bicara* programme on Monday.

Introducing strategies and action plans under the policy is the absolute right of the states in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak, he added.

Shamsul emphasised that the policy never took over the powers of state governments and it should be read together with any other written policy relating to forest management for the three regions.

The Malaysian Forestry Policy, launched on March 21 was agreed upon by all state governments at the 78th National Land Council meeting. It has gone through a process of negotiations among the Peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak since 2016.

On enforcement and monitoring of forests, he said his ministry collaborated with various agencies including the police and military to monitor high-risk "hotspot" areas for forest encroachment.

He said apart from the introduction of the policy, his ministry emphasised the strengthening of the use of technology in forest management through digitisation.

"This includes the development of high-tech applications, data development and geospatial technology to prevent encroachment, in line with the development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution."

Commenting on the 100 Million Tree Planting campaign 2021-2025, Shamsul said more than four million trees had been planted nationwide since it was launched in January. - Bernama