

Malaysia MPOC to advance palm oil industry, supporting smallholders

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The Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) is firmly committed to advancing the national palm oil industry and supporting smallholders in Malaysia. The Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) reaffirms its commitment to advancing the national palm oil industry and supporting smallholders in Malaysia.

This dedication is demonstrated through its workshop series entitled "Pengenalan Standard MSPO dan Aspek Sosial Dalam Perniagaan," which was officially launched by Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani, the Minister of Plantation and Commodities recently.

According to MPOC in a statement, the workshop aimed to provide accurate and up-to-date information to smallholders on important labour issues in the sector.

Specifically, it delved into the issues of forced labour and child labour which need to be eradicated to ensure a fair and sustainable palm oil industry.

Furthermore, the session aimed to elucidate the social dimensions embedded in the revised 2022 MSPO standard, as well as Sarawak Government legislation regarding labour force remuneration, forced labour, and child labour, enhancing the participants' understanding and compliance with these essential guidelines.

The workshop also highlighted concrete steps being taken by the government, palm oil industry players, and local human rights organisations to address labour issues.

Participants also gained a holistic view of proactive steps that could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the palm oil industry, while safeguarding workers' welfare.

Additionally, the workshop also provided an opportunity for oil palm smallholders in Bintulu to share information, experiences, and challenges they face with the organisers, such as issues regarding the employment of foreign workers and their wages.

Labour issues in the palm oil industry have drawn the attention of the Malaysian government, major palm oil importing countries such as the United States and the European Union, as well as international human rights organisations.

Aligning with the government's goal of eradicating forced and child labour from the palm oil industry by 2030, MPOC is committed to promoting positive labour practices among local smallholders, MPOC noted.

During the event, Johari also launched a publication titled "Human Rights and Forced Labour in the Palm Oil Industry," which has been published by MPOC in collaboration with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

This book is part of a broader initiative to equip stakeholders with the knowledge to recognise signs of forced labour, understand its consequences, and implement measures to resolve these critical issues.