

Malaysia to revitalize cocoa farms and boost local production through strategic initiatives

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The Malaysia International Cocoa Festival (MICF) 2025, held from 24 to 27 May 2025, concluded with remarkable success and outstanding achievements in strengthening the national cocoa industry and placing it firmly on the international radar. With over 25,000 visitors attending over four days, MICF 2025 officially achieved its objectives â?? becoming the premier platform that unites innovation, business networking, technical knowledge, and cultural exchange within the regional and global cocoa landscape.

The festival was officiated by the Minister of Plantation and Commodities, YB Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani, who reaffirmed the government's commitment to revitalizing cocoa farms and boosting local production through various strategic initiatives. In his speech, he also highlighted Malaysia's need to comply with the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which now serves as a key guideline in the international export market.

"We not only need to increase our cocoa yield, but also ensure our production complies with traceability, accessibility, and sustainability standards as outlined in the EUDR. Malaysia must be recognized as a responsible and sustainable cocoa producer," he stated.

He further shared that the government will utilize existing land and introduce high-quality modern agricultural practices to double cocoa yields. He urged smallholders, investors, and cooperatives to embrace this national initiative, which also opens new economic opportunities, especially in rural areas.

"Although local cocoa bean production remains modest, our efforts have shown a significant 65% increase from 269 tonnes in 2023 to 445 tonnes in 2024. We must balance a strong downstream sector with more sustainable upstream production," he added.

MICC 2025 welcomed over 1,000 participants from 25 countries, including industry players, government agencies, researchers, and students, in a two-day international conference. The conference featured presentations and forums covering topics such as cocoa sustainability, product innovation, traceability, smart agriculture, and cooperative development.

The Director General of the Malaysian Cocoa Board, Datuk Dr. Ramle Kasin, also played a key role in the success of MICF 2025. He led the MCB team in planning and executing what is considered the most prestigious event in the national cocoa industry calendar. Under his leadership, MCB also strengthened research and development (R&D) in cocoa breeding, processing techniques, and innovative product development.

With Malaysia's cocoa export value reaching RM15 billion in 2024 and export volume increasing to 690,000 tonnes, MICF 2025 clearly demonstrated that the Malaysian cocoa industry remains relevant, has sustainable growth potential, and is globally competitive.