

01 DEC 2000

Ong-Landscape

MINISTRY WANTS MARCH 3 MADE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE DAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 1 (Bernama) -- The Housing and Local Government Ministry has proposed that March 3 be made the National Landscape Day in order to boost measures to make Malaysia green.

Its Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said this was the mark of success for the nationwide tree planting campaign launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 3, 1997.

He said this at the news conference held inconjunction with the presentation of the Malaysia Book of Records certificate to the ministry for the planting of 100,000 trees simultaneously nationwide last Oct 15.

Ong said apart from planting trees, landscaping activity also involved other aspects and components.

"Therefore, we have planned a format for the National Landscape Day to enable different activities be held each year," he said.

On the Oct 15 success, Ong said Malaysia surpassed its initial target of planting 100,000 trees within one minute and had in fact planted 110,461 trees at 152 locations nationwide.

He said many states had also surpassed their original target in the programme.

"With this campaign, we felt that our objective of improving public awareness and interest on quality, beautiful and healthy surroundings has been achieved," he said.

Ong however expressed his disappointment over the Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory's failure in meeting its target of planting 7,000 trees in the campaign, managing only 3,784 on the excuse that there was lack of suitable areas.

He said such a factor could not be used as an excuse as all parties should galvanise their efforts in planting trees especially in residential areas with a high population density.

"I feel the concrete jungle situation in Kuala Lumpur need to be seriously resolved as development should be balanced with greenery," Ong said.

-- BERNAMA

MLS ES ZUL