

Government Gathering Momentum In Fight Against Biopiracy
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 25 (Bernama) -- The government is gathering momentum in the fight against biopiracy or biological theft where indigenous plants were collected by corporations who patented them for their own use to the detriment of the country where they originated from.

Natural Resources and Environment Ministry's Biodiversity and Forestry Management deputy undersecretary K. Nagulendran said biopiracy occurred physically as well as ethnologically, namely by stealing traditional knowledge and local practices.

He said for example, in Sarawak, American scientists documented traditional knowledge of a tree from the ethnic community and turned it into a product which had gone through a clinical trial for a possible anti-HIV vaccine.

"So all these (biodiversity products) have potentials. What is important, the traditional knowledge of ingenious people needed to be protected," he said.

He was speaking to reporters at the consultative session with Orang Asli, local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the drafting of the Biological Resources and Benefit Sharing Bill here today.

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