

**Government Fulfils Its Promises To Smallholders - Mohd Shafie
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SUNGAI PETANI, Aug 2 (Bernama) -- The federal government has fulfilled its promises to smallholders, the most recent by raising the financial assistance for rubber replanting so as to encourage them to increase productivity, besides reducing their burden due to rising agriculture input costs.

Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal said the amount was raised to RM9,230 per hectare in the peninsula from RM7,000 previously.

For Sarawak and Sabah, the amount was increased to RM13,500 and RM14,000 per hectare respectively.

"The government's promises made to the smallholders have so far been fulfilled. In fact, this year, the government approved RM397 million for Risda (Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority), the highest in history, to carry out replanting and other development programmes to benefit more smallholders."

He said this after handing out dividends amounting to RM19.7 million for 2,676 participants of the Kedah-level Risda Cluster New Planting (RTBB) and Commercial Replanting schemes, here.

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