

**Indonesia Admits Difficulty In Tackling Haze Problem, But Assures It Will Do Its Best**  
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JAKARTA, Sept 18 (Bernama) -- Indonesia admitted its difficulty in overcoming the haze problem, but gave the assurance that it would do its best to solve it.

Its Vice President Jusof Kalla said the Indonesian government had done what it could over the haze problem, the effects of which were also felt by its neighbouring countries, Malaysia and Singapore.

"I've always said that this is an environmental problem. We have carried out efforts including deploying 20 helicopters and other aircraft to overcome the problem, but clearly it's difficult. This is because it's the dry season now."

He said this at a news conference after receiving a courtesy call from Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi at his office, here, today.

Jusof said the Malaysian government itself had stated its support, that if there were Malaysian plantation companies, especially in Sumatra, involved in open burning, thus causing the haze, action could be taken against them.

"What is important is doing our best (in tackling the haze problem) but climate change has also contributed to the problem.

"As neighbouring countries, we together enjoy our world and we all bear the consequences of we do wrong (mismanaging the environment). In reality, we (Indonesia) suffer more (from the haze problem)," he said.

On another matter, Jusof said Malaysia and Indonesia as the world's biggest producer of palm oil should be united in facing competition from other edible oils such as soya and sunflower seed oil.

"Malaysia and Indonesia produce 80 per cent of the world's palm oil and we have to face competition from other sources (of edible oil), hence the need for Malaysia and Indonesia to be united in facing this challenge," he said.

On the one-hour meeting with Ahmad Zahid today, Jusof said their discussion focused on better Malaysia-Indonesia relations.

"We also discussed the economy, social issues and regional peace," he said.

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