

**Kedah is biggest ketum producer**

LUCRATIVE CROP

# KEDAH IS BIGGEST KETUM PRODUCER

National Anti-Drugs Agency says it has identified farms run by 81 people

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**K**EDAH has emerged as the largest supplier of ketum in the country with over 32ha of ketum farms across the state, generating sales volume of up to RM1 million per month.

National Anti-Drugs Agency (Nada) director Mohd Nazir Mustafa, in revealing this, said the agency had identified the farms, which were be-

ing operated by 81 people.

He said ketum leaves harvested in the state were being smuggled to Thailand.

Nazir said ketum farms in Padang Terap, Kota Setar, Pokok Sena and Kubang were identified as top producers of the crop.

Apart from the lucrative returns, he said the planting and nurturing of the ketum crops were less hassle compared with padi and rubber trees as farmers dealt with fewer pest threats.

Some padi and rubber tree farm-

ers turned to ketum due its higher profit margin compared with conventional crops.

"Checks showed that an owner of 0.8ha ketum farm was able to generate a monthly income up to RM30,000," he said at his office in Anak Bukit yesterday.

Nazir said the soil in Kedah was suitable for ketum planting.

"The most important fact is that ketum farming is not an offence under to the Malaysian law, be it under Dangerous Drugs Act or the Poisons Act."

He said action could only be taken against the abuse of ketum leaves, hence the authorities had no power to act against the owners of the such farms.



*Ketum farms in Padang Terap, Kota Setar, Pokok Sena and Kubang have been identified as top producers of the crop. PIC COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-DRUGS AGENCY*