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Drop Likely In Rubber Production

Standard Staff Correspondent

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — There may be a drop in rubber production in the next few months due to troubles on estates in Negri Sembilan and Selangor, while a great deal of rubber is said to be going into the hands of bandits, directly from abandoned Chinese-owned estates and from illegal tapping.

Bandits are said to be selling the rubber obtained from these sources through their agents.

European owned estates in Negri Sembilan and Selangor, who have had demands from their workers for minimum

wages of \$7 daily, are without labour today as they have refused to pay what they described as "bandit wages."

It is believed bandits in these parts are exerting their pressure on estate labourers to demand more wages.

Tapping has ceased on many of these estates, as practically the whole of the Chinese labour forces are not working.

Bandits in south Selangor, who have been denied supplies of money and food from Jenderam, since the destruction of the vil-



lage, are believed now to be trying to get money and help from estate workers in the areas of Kajang, Denkil, Bangi and Sungei Chua.

It is said that part of the \$7

minimum wages demanded by tappers may go towards the bandit funds.

A representative of the Malaysian Planting Industries Employers' Association told The Standard that estates were not going to pay such wages.

He expected production on these estates would be seriously affected as there would be practically no tapping until they could get workers on reasonable rates.

Estates gravely affected were those whose labour forces had consisted largely of Chinese, he said.

The normal rate paid to the tappers is \$3.10 daily, plus 40 cents special cost of living allowance.

An arbitration board, he said, was sitting at the present on wages for estate labourers.



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Last Updated 2023-01-31