

Sarawak has most forest and land fires in Malaysia

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PETALING JAYA: Sarawak recorded over 860 Modis (Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer) fire alerts from Jan 1 to Aug 1, said fire-monitoring platform Global Forest Watch Fires (GFW Fires).

This places Sarawak as the state with the highest number of forest and land fires in Malaysia, ahead of Sabah (which recorded 241 Modis fire alerts), Pahang (54), Terengganu (37), and Selangor (26).

The Sarawak districts with the highest number of forest and land fires were Bahagian Miri (Long Lama), Belaga, Kapit and Bintulu.

GFW Fires' real-time report also indicated that the number of fire alerts in Malaysia has gone down by 70% compared with 2016.

Charts showed that 4,673 Modis fire alerts were recorded between January and July 2016, while the corresponding months for 2017 recorded only 1,342 alerts.

Modis is a satellite-imagery instrument on board two Nasa scientific research satellites that are currently orbiting the Earth.

GFW Fires combines real-time satellite data from Nasa's Active Fires system, high-resolution satellite imagery, detailed maps of land cover and concessions for key commodities such as palm oil and wood pulp, weather conditions and air quality data to track fire activity in the region.

It was recently reported that wildfires and open burning woes were returning to Miri and Kuala Baram, with concerns that farmers and plantation workers were taking advantage of the dry season to clear agricultural land by setting dry bushes on fire.

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