

## The Star : Ministry to set minimum content for Tongkat Ali drinks

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PUTRAJAYA: The brew claiming to contain *Tongkat Ali* may not be living up to the aphrodisiac values attributed to the plant and producers could be charged with misleading the public under a new health standard if they make such claims.

To banish doubts about the potency of the beverages, the Health Ministry will set a minimum content of *Tongkat Ali* (*Eurycoma longifolia*) in drinks such as tea and coffee.

Minister Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek said that analysis by the ministry, universities and the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) showed that the *Tongkat Ali* content is at a minimal level in many drinks and did not have any effect at all for the consumer.

The advertisement says it is coffee with *Tongkat Ali*. And the consumer pays more for it, he told reporters at his ministry's Hari Raya open house here yesterday.

He said once the standards are set, manufacturers could be charged if their products did not have the required level of the *Tongkat Ali*, which is said to contain aphrodisiac qualities.

It was reported in July that a FRIM study of 10 popular *Tongkat Ali* coffee brands showed that seven of them contained only 0.25% to 1.6% of the plant extract and was not sufficient to benefit one's health.

Dr Chua said his ministry hoped to draw up the standards over the next few months and will discuss it with the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry to have it included under the Trade Description Act.