

BAT: More drastic actions r to stop tobacco black mark

KUALA LUMPUR: British American Tobacco (Malaysia) Bhd has urged the public, including its shareholders, to play a more proactive role in speaking up against the tobacco black market due to its severe impact on the economy.

BAT Malaysia managing director Jonathan Reed said the tobacco black market continued to grow last year despite the various initiatives undertaken by the government and this would halt the nation's economic recovery and growth.

"This has forced the company

to aggressively manage our cost base in order to deliver shareholder value, (but) this is not sustainable in the long term.

"To effectively stop the black market, more drastic and radical actions are required.

"We believe that if we band together and bring it to light, the government and policymakers will listen and take definitive action to combat this problem once and for all," he said in a statement released after the conclusion of the company's 59th Annual General Meeting yesterday.

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