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Agriculture

THINK-TANK SUPPORTS CALLS TO ESTABLISH AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY

KOTA KINABALU, Sept 25 (Bernama) -- A research institute here has expressed support for a call to set up an agricultural university in the country and proposed that the university be set up in Sabah.

Executive director of the Institute for Indigenous Economic Progress (Sabah) (Indep) Wilfred Madius Tangau said that there was a lot of merit in the suggestion especially when it comes to food production.

"It is also pertinent that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad made a reference to Sabah when it comes to agricultural development as well as food production," he said in a statement, here.

In line with that, he said, it would only be logical that the new "University of Agriculture" should be located in Sabah, for instance, by upgrading the existing Timbang Menggaris Agriculture Institute in Kota Belud into a university.

He was commenting on the calls for the setting up of such a university by the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca) yesterday who felt that it could help raise food production in the country by further developing research and development (R&D) and inventing the machinery needed to speed up agricultural production.

Tangau said such a university could also conduct research as to how existing traditional farmers, such as the hill padi cultivators could productively participate in food production.

"Much more needs to be done to ensure traditional farmers benefit from government initiative in enhancing agricultural output. I am sure that the new vision of the prime minister in pursuing aggressive agriculture development will have strong support from Malaysians across the land," he said.

On Wednesday, Dr Mahathir spoke of his new vision for Malaysia to develop its agricultural sector to become a major food producer and exporter.

"The new initiative of the prime minister will certainly be more meaningful if active participation from the indigenous people in modern agricultural production is made as an integral component of the new vision," he said.

Therefore, the establishment of the agriculture university in Sabah would certainly be a welcomed initiative of the government, Tangau said.

-- BERNAMA

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