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480,000 Bumis from Kelantan invest RM2 billion in unit trusts

KOTA BARU, Fri. - Kelantan recorded more than RM2 billion in investments in unit trust funds introduced by Permaodalan Nasional Berhad, making it the second highest after Sabah.

Investments in the unit trust funds grew by 12.2 per cent last year, second only to Sabah which saw an increase by 14 per cent.

PNB chairman Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid said 480,000 Bumiputeras from Kelantan invested in the corporation's unit trust funds, which showed a high level of awareness on such investments.

"But I believe more can participate as 910,000 Bumiputeras in Kelantan are eligible," he said at the launching of Amanah Saham Didik by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

Ahmad Sarji said PNB would continue to be careful in managing its unit trust funds and in making investment decisions to ensure competitive returns in the long term.

"Our performance can be gauged from the equity holdings in big companies which are involved in the major sectors of the economy and able to contribute to the nation's economic growth.

"We can see this achievement in our holdings in companies formerly owned by foreigners such as Kumpulan Guthrie Bhd, Golden Hope Plantations Bhd, Sime Darby Bhd and Malaysia Mining Corporation Bhd.

"Our involvement in these companies also provided employment opportunities and created more skilled workers among Bumiputeras," he added.

Based on the Seventh Malaysia Plan mid-term review, he said 36 per cent of the professionals were Bumiputeras.

From PNB's strategic investments in 22 companies, the professional manpower among Bumiputeras increased two fold by 53 per cent.

Ahmad Sarji said companies where PNB had investments created 563 entrepreneurs involved with the franchise and vendor system with the business value worth more than RM453.4 million.

PNB controlled 400,000 hectares of plantation land and created more than 100,000 job opportunities.

"From 1981 to 2000, PNB had distributed RM31 billion in the form of dividends and bonuses to nearly two million unit holders," he said.

He said 738,884 people who had benefitted were farmers and fishermen, 625,027 were settlers and 378,993 were armed forces and police personnel.

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