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MORE EMPHASIS FOR AGRICULTURAL SECTOR NEXT YEAR

TANJUNG KARANG, Oct 20 (Bernama) -- The Selangor government will give greater emphasis to the agricultural sector in efforts to reduce the country's increasing dependence on imported food, said Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo.

He said such efforts, which would not be at the expense of the industrial sector as the biggest contributor to the state's economic growth, would be carried out by introducing modern methods in food production.

"We will declare next year as the Agricultural Sector Development Year in line with the desire of the Federal Government to give more emphasis to the sector," he told reporters after officiating the state-level Farmers, Breeders and Fishermen's Day, here today.

In tabling the 2002 Budget yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is also Finance Minister, stressed how important it was to develop the agricultural sector in a modern manner by introducing mixed farming to reduce food imports.

In the budget, out of the RM5.34 billion allocated for rural development, RM1.58 billion would be for the agricultural sector.

-- BERNAMA

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