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PNB launches new unit trust scheme today

PERMODALAN Nasional Bhd wants to increase its investments in fixed income instruments and reduce the exposure to equities through its new unit trust fund.

This is in view of the current uncertainties in the local stock market. PNB, the country's largest fund manager, currently has 90 per cent of its funds in equities.

The new unit trust scheme, which is the eighth in the PNB range of unit trusts, will be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad today.

It is open to all Malaysians, aged 18 and above.

Chief executive officer Datuk Hamad Kama Piah Che Othman said among the non-equity markets PNB is looking at, include the bond market and the money market which provide stable returns.

He said the new fund would provide investors the balance in equities investments and fixed income instruments.

"Usually, we invest largely on equity assets and when the market goes weak, the arrangement affects the returns," he said after closing PNB's Quality-day celebration in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

With the new strategy, PNB expects to balance the returns of the equity and non-equity and create a stronger portfolio.

To a question, Hamad Kama Piah said the time is right to launch a new unit trust fund, adding that for long term investors, now is the right time to buy the shares when the price is at the low level.

Hamad Kama Piah however declined to reveal more about the new fund saying that it is limited in size and will be offered under the "first come first served" basis.

The new scheme was said to be the follow-up to PNB's previous funds namely Amanah Saham Wawasan 2020 (ASW) and Amanah Saham Malaysia (ASM), which are also open to all Malaysians.

Besides ASW and ASM, PNB handles the Amanah Saham Bumiputera, Amanah Saham Nasional (ASN) and ASN2, Amanah Harta Tanah and Amanah Saham Didik.

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