

Help turn Felda into economic, political powerhouse, settlers urged
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has urged Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) settlers to leverage their networks in order to help turn Felda into an economic and political powerhouse.

He said Felda's goals were about social mobility, and this has already been achieved with flying colours.

However, he said the Felda community could soar to greater heights if it pooled its resources.

"One of Felda's goals is to not merely raise the rural incomes – giving land and eradicating poverty – but also provide for social mobility in the community. This is why about 50,000 descendants, perhaps more, of Felda settlers are not in the Klang Valley.

"What we are hoping for is the main objective of Felda's founding, which to turn Felda into an economic and political powerhouse.

"This is akin to killing two birds with one stone, and to achieve this, we need networking to enable us to work as closely as possible with those whom we consider to be a part of the Felda community – whether they are still in the settlement, or have already left it to go to university and now occupy positions such as entrepreneurs, and are successful in their respective fields.

"If we muster their energy, their minds, and their resources, I believe that more people, especially in the second and third generation (of Felda settlers), can benefit from the networking and cooperation that we have fostered," he said.

Najib was speaking to Felda settlers at a Hari Raya Aifilfitri function in Putrajaya today, where he also handed out appointment letters to cluster heads of the Gabungan Pemikir Profesional Felda (Gaprof) for the 2016-2018 term.

According to booklets handed out to guests at the function, Gaprof was formed in 2009 as the brainchild of Najib, who now serves as the group's patron.

Among its objectives is to serve as a think-tank for Felda settlers and their offspring on Felda-related issues, and identify issues and propose solutions for the prime minister.

It also aims to gather the knowledge and experience of the professionals among the Felda community, in order to help Felda and the government improve its administration.

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