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PRIME NEWS

PM opens first agro mini-market

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WELFARE: It'll lower dependence on middlemen, boost income of traders, says Najib

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said more outlets would be opened to help farmers, Ashermen, livestock breeders and small manufacturers sell their produce and other products at

a lower price to coisumers.

He said the Malaysia People's Agrobazaar was to help the people face the rising cost of living and reduce their dependence on middlemen.

"This is another effort to improve the people's welfare after die success of Kedai Rakyat Malaysia (KRIM), Klinik Rakyat Malaysia and Malaysia People's Housing projects.

"More such projects will be implemented under the 11th Malaysia Plan," he said when opening the first Malaysia People's Agrobazaar at Indera Mahkota here yesterday.

Adopting a mini-market concept, the agrobazaar offers 40 per cent fresh produce and 60 per cent agriculture-based products that are mostly supplied by local farmers



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak visiting the Malaysia People's Agrobazaar in Indera Mahkota, Kuantan, yesterday. With him is Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (third from left). Pic by Luqman Hakim Zubir

and small manufacturers here.

Najib said such agrobazaars allowed suppliers to sell their products straight to the people.

"Farmers, Hshermen and livestock breeders want bigger market and reasonable prices for their produce. It can be achieved if we do not have middlemen who are proAteering too much."

He congratulated the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Ministry on its effort to reduce the role of middlemen.

"If we can control the supply chain, we may reduce the prices further. We must also have more ef-

ficient logisdcs to ensure that the produce and goods from suppliers could reach consumers at a lower cost."

Najib said such initiatives would boost the income of farmers, fishermen, livestock breeders and small manufacturers, as well as help the people get supplies at a reasonable price.

He said the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax would benefit the rural people as the government would have more funds to help them.

Earlier, Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri

Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the ministry targeted 600 Malaysia People's Agrobazaars by 2020, with the first 50 units ready this year.

Unlike KRIM, he said, the agrobazaars would be owned by the locals in the rural and suburban areas, who would be trained to operate the premises effectively.

The agrobazaar sells 2,000 produce and agriculture-based products, with their prices between five and 20 per cent lower than other outlets. It has a special counter for Agrobank where the people can perform small transactions and pay bills.