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## PM: Agriculture sector must be a global player

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia must embrace a global and open approach as part of its move to further boost the agricultural sector in a bid to become an international player, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"That is why the Government has taken a global approach in developing the agricultural sector, including making Asean a free trade area and participating in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and other Jsee trade agreements so that we become a global player," he said in his opening remarks during the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) 50th anniversary celebration at Dataran Merdeka here yesterday.

For Malaysia to be respected, Najib said the country must be able to compete on the global arena.

"We must be able to compete with other developed countries and succeed in competing. Only then can we be recognised as a successful nation.

"I always envision our agricultural sector as a global player. We cannot just depend on selling our agricultural products along the roadside," he said.

The country's agricultural sector, Najib said, had become more progressive, dynamic and modern under the leadership of the Federal government.

Najib said the industry must be guided by innovation and high productivity as well as adopt the latest technology.

"Our farmers must practise the best international practices to further improve on the international level. That is why we always promote the opening up of Agro

Bazaars in other countries, such as in China and Singapore," he said.

Najib, who is also the Finance Minister, announced a RM50mil interest free micro credit scheme under the Public Private Partnership Unit (UKAS) of the Prime Minister's Department for entrepreneurs to open up new businesses as assistance in working capital and buying new equipment.

He said the Government had also approved RM220mil to set up the new Agro Food one-stop centre as well as Fama's new headquarters in Kelana Jaya.

"We would also like to announce the launch of the Agro Bazaar online so that our farmers can sell their products to anywhere in the world and the KopieSatu Malaysia franchise aimed at helping youths open up cafes, caravans and trolley businesses," he said.



Today's special: Najib garnishing a KopieSatu drink at the Fama 50th Anniversary at Dataran Merdeka.