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# Move to improve food security

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## Warm welcome:

Najib greeting guests at Felcra's 50th anniversary celebrations in Kuala Lumpur. With him are Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (on Najib's right) and Felcra Bhd chairman Datuk Seri Bung Moktar Radin (on Ismail's right).



## Najib: Felcra will lead efforts to cut dependence on imports

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Federal Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority (Felcra) will spearhead efforts to reduce dependence on imported food and improve food security, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Currently, there is no authority or government agency tackling the issue of food security in a serious and professional manner, he said.

Najib said food imports last year exceeded RM45.4bil, including

RM5.2bil for staples and edible product imports, RM3.4bil for dairy products, RM1.8bil for fruits and vegetables and RM1.5mil for cocoa.

"This scenario prompted the Government to nominate Felcra as the leader in Malaysia's food security efforts," he said at Felcra's 50th anniversary celebrations here yesterday.

Najib said the food security process was very important especially in screening for halal meat and poultry products.

Felcra will, therefore, take steps,

he said, to compete in the halal meat and poultry industry.

On the subject of education, Najib announced a 20% discount rate, or RM4,000, for National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) repayment for students of Felcra colleges starting next year.

"For this, Felcra will set aside RM20mil for the next 10 years and about 500 students each year will stand a chance to receive the assistance," he said.

Najib also added that the Government would guarantee

PTPTN loans for students in Felcra colleges.

As for budding entrepreneurs under Felcra, Najib announced an extra allocation for the Felcra start-up fund to allow more members to own businesses.

"The startup fund was founded in 2009 and has since helped 1,100 entrepreneurs with a total of RM12.5mil in loans," he said.

The fund currently has RM6.3mil and an additional RM5mil would be provided for a total of RM11.3mil to encourage more Felcra entrepreneurs next year.