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Coconuts bring fortune to disabled man

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Entrepreneur
one of
NCIA's
success stories

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PUTRAJAYA: Ahmad Shaupi Ismail used to earn only a few hundred ringgit a month. Now, he is a proud entrepreneur whose coconut jelly business is providing job opportunities for the less fortunate.

The physically-disabled father of three had tried it all – from running a motor repair shop to farming but it is this business that has brought him luck and fortune.

Ahmad Shaupi of Manjung, Perak, now earns a steady income of RM2,500 a month.

“When I was involved in pineapple farming, I also learned to make coconut jelly to supplement my income, as it takes a year for the pineapple to be ready for picking.

“I sold my coconut jelly to school canteens, sundry shops and food outlets. My orders were quite high.



Man of the hour: (From right) Redza, Najib and Ahmad Shaupi during the presentation in Putrajaya.

“I was then introduced to officers from the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority who helped provide me with equipment so that I could expand my business,” he said.

The NCIA, under its community innovation centre initiative, provided Ahmad Shaupi, 49, with a freez-

er, an ice maker and a specially-designed kitchen.

The entrepreneur gave back to society by hiring four helpers with learning difficulties and taught them not only how to make delicious coconut jelly, but also how to run a business.

“I was given a helping hand when

I faced hardship. I believe it is my responsibility to help others,” he said.

M. Ponvannan, 29, of Alor Pongsu, Perak is another success story – his chilli farming venture received a boost from NCIA.

The diploma holder in computer engineering is now earning up to

RM9,000 a month.

“I was told that there is money in farming and I wanted to give it a try. I believe I did the right thing. Farming is hard work but then again, so are other jobs,” he said.

Ahmad Shaupi and Ponvannan, along with three others who benefited from NCIA’s programmes shared their success stories with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi after the NCIA 17th council meeting yesterday.

NCIA chief executive officer Datuk Redza Rafiq said the Prime Minister was heartened by how programmes initiated by the authority is now benefiting the people.

“If a company is brought into an area, the people there don’t just look from the sideline. They participate. This is the concept of shared value that we have,” he said.

Redza said that despite the challenging economic backdrop, NCIA achieved RM8.3bil in private sector participation and created 12,376 jobs last year in the Northern Corridor Economic Region.

For this year, it hopes to achieve a cumulative investment of RM87.3bil, creating 110,000 jobs and record an average monthly income of RM2,100 for the bottom 40% income earners.