



Mahathir looking at hybrid padi seedlings grown using the 'Bayer SeedGrowth' technique which is able to boost production of quality rice, after opening the 2019 National Padi Convention in Alor Star yesterday.

## Govt mulls large-scale padi cultivation

**ALOR STAR:** The government has heard the views of a former head of a plantation company which can serve as the framework to implement large-scale padi cultivation, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The prime minister said Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Bakke Salleh had tabled the proposal on the amalgamation of land which is applicable for large-scale padi farming.

Mohd Bakke was the managing director of Sime Darby Plantation Bhd.

"He is familiar with the management of oil palm and rubber plantations and he has written a working

paper on the ways to amalgamate land into bigger farms, which is not limited only to padi," he told a press conference after opening the National Padi Convention 2019.

Mahathir said the proposal could be applied in the case of padi farmers in the country, many of whom are Malays with each owning small plots of padi land.

"Malays have two or three acres of land, and cultivate oil palm. This is not profitable. Rubber is also not profitable. They have to amalgamate (the land) to enlarge the acreage and manage (the crop) professionally, putting the land to the best use to make it profitable," he said. - Bernama