

**Government Welcomes Investments In Fruit Farming – Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- Any investment in growing sweet aromatic mango trees to complement that of the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) is always welcome, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said this would help increase fruit production in line with the government's plan to modernise the agricultural sector.

"But it must start with research and development in order to help boost farmers' income. Hence, MARDI's role is very important.

"Perhaps other parties can help improve mangga harum manis (sweet aromatic mango) farming method," he said in an interview on Astro Awani, Sunday night.

He was answering a question from a sweet aromatic mango entrepreneur from Perlis who had been striving to increase his fruit yield from once a year to three times a year.

Najib also shared his and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor's experience in rock melon farming on a plot of land at their Seri Perdana residence, Putrajaya by engaging a company to plant the fruit.

"The company cultivated two acres of the land with rock melon using the autopot system. Last year, we've got a net profit of RM600,000 and this year's RM550,000. Last year's profit was donated to the single mothers' association while this year to the autistic association.

"What I want to say here is that, modern agricultural technology method can give high yields," he said.

Besides agriculture, Najib said the government wanted to see fishermen improve their livelihood, earn higher income and becoming more satisfied with their career.

He said the government encouraged fishermen to use large boats equipped with modern technology such as the Global Positioning System and deep-sea fishing equipment.

"We need to increase our catch. Maybe we can create artificial reefs to increase fish breeding grounds. Income will eventually drop if we do not increase its sources," he said.

In another development, Najib said Malaysia needed more venture capitalists and angel investors to pave the way for the creation of the 'My Creative Venture Capital'.

He said this was important to enable the country to have an ecosystem that could accommodate large-scale innovation processes.

"We need a group of people who could make assessments not based on assets and track records, but on ideas that have been patented as intellectual properties and commercially viable. This is a challenge as we normally use conventional methods," he said.

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