

Najib Calls On Commodities Sector To Provide Added Value
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PEKAN, July 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak called on the commodities sector to provide added value at every level, right from early production to marketing, as the country should not be dependent on mere commodities forever.

He urged smallholders to be pro-active, diversify their economic activities and practice efficient management as commodities alone were not sufficient to ensure a consistently high income.

"If we want to attract the younger generations we must show them a more productive commodities sector. The challenge is for smallholders to become more competitive and dynamic," he said after presenting Risda dividends and launching the national level younger generation smallholders programme, here Saturday.

He stressed that if Malaysia solely depended on the sector it would continue to be affected by the rise and fall of the global economy.

"Recently the government approved a one-off RM500 aid to ease the burden of rubber smallholders who were affected by the drop in rubber prices," he said.

Najib announced that Risda had declared dividends of RM193.5 million for 16,080 participants of the new cluster land scheme and 41,675 participants of the commercial replanting scheme. He said the government had also allocated RM10 million through Risda to implement the young generation smallholders programme in the 2014 Budget.

"We will also implement the Risda smallholders' children scholarship scheme," he added.

He said that for a start 2,000 students whose parents were smallholders would receive RM50 monthly.

"A total of 2,000 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia students will receive RM50 a month during their exam year," he said.

Also present at the function were Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob and Risda director-general Datuk Wan Mohamad Zuki Mohamad.

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