

**Agro-Food Sector Needs To Be More Dynamic, Modern, Innovative – Najib  
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KOTA SAMARAHAN (Sarawak), Nov 28 (Bernama) -- The agro-food sector in the country needs to be more dynamic, modern and innovative, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the old mindset that agriculture is merely a self sustenance endeavour must be scrapped.

He cited the success of countries such as the Netherlands, Japan, New Zealand and Australia which have become leading world agricultural product exporters after incorporating technology and innovation into the sector.

The prime minister said the government had always encouraged farmers, livestock breeders and fishermen to capitalise on technology for higher productivity.

If the national agricultural sector thrives, so would the population, he said, adding that the government had set aside a special allocation of RM5.3 billion in Budget 2016 for the sector.

Najib said initiatives had also been made to reduce goods prices aside from plans to launch another 50 farmers' markets and 150 1Malaysia People's Agro Bazaars next year.

"I would like to announce that in Sarawak, four more farmers' markets and 10 more 1Malaysia People's Agro Bazaars will be opened next year," he said.

The prime minister said this while launching the national-level Farmers, Livestock Breeders and Fishermen's Day (HPPNK) 2015 celebrations at Dewan Suarah Kota Samarahan here today.

In attendance were Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem and Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang, Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob and Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azlan Man.

Also present were Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek and other Cabinet ministers.

About 10,000 people were also at the celebrations which would continue until Thursday.

Najib also agreed with Ahmad Shabery's suggestion that farmers, livestock breeders and fishermen should be recognised as heroes.

"According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's estimation, the world population by 2020 would be around 9.7 billion, compared to 7.2 billion currently.

"And if food production is not increased to 60 per cent from the present, the world would experience serious famine," he said.

"Food security would become one of the major challenges for the world aside from terrorism, extremist ideologies and climate change," Najib added.

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