

Govt to continue to produce agropreneurs - Salleh

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KOTA BELUD, March 16 (Bernama) -- The government will continue to produce more high-income agropreneurs in the country to meet the increasing demand for food products, said Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Dr Salleh Said Keruak.

To achieve it, he said, various facilities were provided by the government, including financial aid, which is in the form of grants and loans, for farmers to venture into business.

"The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations expects the world population to reach 9.1 billion in 2050 and to meet the demand, food production has to be increased by 70 per cent.

"This provides an opportunity for us to develop agriculture into an industry," he said at the handing over of the Kota Belud Padi Crop Disaster Fund here today.

Also present was Kota Belud Integrated Agriculture Development Area (IADA) director Salmah Labula.

Salleh said that under the 2018 Budget, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced an allocation of RM200 million specially for the "new source of wealth initiative" to produce agropreneurs.

He said under the initiative, among the listed agriculture products were corn, coconut, durian, dairy and culinary.

The government, he said, also provided grants and loans through programmes, such as Young Agropreneur, Agrobank and the National Entrepreneur Group Economic Fund (TEKUN), which was allocated RM500 million.

"Comes 2050, we need to have agropreneurs who are dynamic, creative and capable of becoming leaders in food business," he said.

He advised farmers to take advantage and utilise facilities provided by the government to become successful agropreneurs.

On today's programme, Salleh said 366 padi farmers whose crop was damaged in the flood which hit Kota Belud last year received a total of RM730, 429.

The aid is given to reflect the concern of the government under Najib's leadership and to ease the burden of the farmers, he added.

"It is hoped that the aid from the government reduces the burden of the farmers concerned," he said.

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