

Tajuk :  
More agro-entrepreneurs soon

# More agro-entrepreneurs soon

BY HARUN JAU

**KUCHING:** SABERKAS, Sarawak's premier youth organisation, wants more youth in Sarawak to involve in agriculture and become agro-entrepreneurs.

Its President Datuk Amar Abang Haji Johari Tun Openg revealed that Deputy State Secretary Datu Misnu Taha would be in-charge of the training programmes.

"SABERKAS, being a non-governmental organisation (NGO), will have to provide the training that can give bright future to the younger generation, and at the same time, to complement the efforts of the state government," he told a press conference after chairing SABERKAS' Exco meeting at Grand Margherita Hotel here yesterday.

Johari said that in terms of policy direction, Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Office (Resource Planning

and Bumiputra Entrepreneurs Development) Datuk Haji Mohd Naroden Majais, who is also Vice-President of SaberKas, would help to formulate the best strategy to provide skills training for the younger generation.

SABERKAS, he said, had two agro-based training modules - one in Kabuloh Agriculture Station in Miri where it assigned selected youth to work on plots of lands to plant fruits and vegetables to give them returns besides grooming them to become agriculture-based entrepreneurs and take up agriculture seriously on commercial basis.

"Actually, we already have this programme before the Agriculture Graduate Programme under the federal government. What we will do is, we work together with the federal agencies to produce skilled young agriculture-based business entrepreneurs," said Johari, who is also Minister of

Housing.

He also said that SABERKAS had identified a 10-acre plot in Paloh Training Area of the Agriculture Department near UNIMAS and UiTM Campuses in Kota Samarahan where an incubator with the latest technology to produce organic food products would be set up.

He added that the incubator facilities would be set up this year to take in 10 trainees.

"The idea is we want to tap the latest hydroponic technology to produce agriculture food products. This technology can be produced by our local scientists and we are going to work together with Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI)," Johari said, adding that part of the fund for setting up the incubator and the infrastructure would be provided by the Ministry.

"SABERKAS has been given a grant of RM650,000 by the federal

government to help kick start the training programme this year," he revealed.

Johari also disclosed the state government had formulated a policy to launch the Bumiputera Trust Fund and the Chief Minister had directed SABERKAS to compliment the efforts of the government and supply the people who could be trained.

"The methods are being worked out and the package will be given to young people, including rural youth. We hope at the end of the day they will participate in the economic development, particularly in SCORE area, not only in terms of manufacturing and services but also in agriculture," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, SABERKAS is now in the midst of setting up 71 branches in preparation for its triennial general meeting (TGM) which is scheduled to be held in August this year.

"We will apply the new constitution that had been approved by the Registrar of Societies (ROS). With that SABERKAS will be an organisation representing all areas and all communities.

He said SaberKas had been contributing to the development of the state since 1970s and in this new era of social media and ICT, SABERKAS had to change its emphasis, particularly in preparing the youth for the future.

"What we are working on today are for the future of the younger generation. Our hope is that the young people will prepare themselves with latest skills and knowledge so that they can play their role in the social and economic transformation," he added.

SABERKAS now has about 130,000 members, of whom, about three-quarter of them are under 45 years of age.



DATUK AMAR ABANG HAJI JOHARI  
TUN OPENG