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UKKMOA

UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN PERTANIAN & INDUSTRI ASAS TANI
(UNTUK EDARAN DALAMAN MOA, JABATAN DAN AGENSI SAHAJA)



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FOOD SECURITY

SECURING FOOD FROM PLOUGH TO PLATE

The new government should invest big in sustainable agricultural production and consumption to ensure food security

APROMISE by the new government to guarantee the basic food needs of the nation and to safeguard the welfare of farmers is indeed timely. This is consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that focuses explicitly on food by seeking to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”.

To achieve this, the government needs to address issues and challenges agriculture and food security present from the supply and demand side of the equation.

On the supply side, Malaysia's agricultural sector is divided into two sub-sectors: commodity and food. In general, commodity crops, such as palm oil, have grown rapidly and have contributed significantly to national development.

For instance, in 2016, our agriculture sector contributed 8.1 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) with oil palm alone contributing 43.1 per cent of the GDP of the agriculture sector, followed by other agriculture (19.5 per cent), livestock (11.6 per cent), fishing (11.5 per cent), forestry and logging (7.2 per cent) and rubber (7.1 per cent). Commodity crops such as oil palm are dominated by plantation sector with good management practices.

But, the food sub-sector consisting of food crops, livestock and fisheries is yet to match the commodity crop performance and faces many issues that prevent it from developing rapidly. At present, the country is still facing production shortfall: rice (72 per cent), vegetables (72 per

cent), beef (23 per cent), goat meat (8.0 per cent), and milk (5.0 per cent). This has led Malaysia to record a trade deficit for some years now. And the deficit is on the uptrend.

For example, in 1990, the food trade deficit was RM1.1 billion. In 2006, it increased to RM8.5 billion due to higher import growth, and in 2016, the trade deficit was RM16.5 billion. Some of the causes for the food sector's underperformance are underinvestment in agricultural research, small scale farms with low level of technology, agro-entrepreneurship, climate change, and depleting resources.

On the demand side, Malaysia has seen a greater variety and volume of higher value and higher protein food (such as meat, fish and milk). The demand for staple food among the lower quintile of the population, however, has increased as the income elasticity of this group is high. Consumers also demand new food products, new packaging, more convenience, new delivery systems, and safer and more nutritious foods.

Other than supply and demand parameters, global mega trends are also affecting the domestic landscape of agriculture and food security. These include accelerating urbanisation, climate change and resource constraints, demographic shifts and income growth, technology breakthrough, knowledge exploitation and techno-entrepreneurship, and changing food distribution system.

RAPID URBANISATION — Urbanisation has shown to have a significant effect on food consumption in terms of dietary



Norwegian fish farming technology at work. An idea that may need big investment. FILE PIC

habits and food preferences. Since urbanisation is expected to proceed rapidly in a number of developing countries, including Malaysia, over the next decades projections of future global food supply and demand balances need to take such structural changes into account. Domestically, this has placed an increasing pressure on the existing food production systems as well as food quality and safety from plough to plate.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS — Climate change poses challenges for all sectors of the Malaysian economy, but particularly those sectors dependent on natural resources such as agriculture. Despite technological advances in biotechnology, climate is still a key factor in determining agricultural productivity.

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS AND POPULATION AND INCOME GROWTH — This will affect consumers' tastes and behaviours in terms of concern for safety and quality of food and nutritional change of Malaysian society.

TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH — The development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) that emphasises virtual reality technology without much use of manpower will affect the input structure of the agricultural sector, especially in terms of automation, drones and robotics.

EXPLOITATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP — The function of tertiary institutions has evolved from focusing only on teaching and learning to exploitation and commercialisation of knowledge. The university is also seen as a trigger for new entrepreneurial activities by utilising the knowledge of their research findings.

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM — The advent of 4IR will alter the food distribution system as we know it. With footfalls gone from supermarkets, they will turn into ware-

houses and distribution centres.

Our agriculture sector needs to transform, and at good speed, too. For starters, the sector needs to leverage on sustainable production and consumption, safety nets, and environment services.

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION — the food sector requires much more investments in agro-entrepreneurship, innovation as well as extension services. The innovation in agriculture and food has to be stepped up and the opportunities of biotechnology, nanotechnology, information and communication technology and other advanced technology applications should be the main research and development agenda particularly on sustainable agricultural practices. Automation and mechanisation are the partial solution to high wages and limited land availability.

Agro-entrepreneurship development can be achieved, among others, through entrepreneurship incubation programme as is being done in Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. Participants are selected mainly from fresh graduates in agriculture and related disciplines who have inclination towards entrepreneurship. They are “incubated” for a certain period and at the end of the incubation where at the end of the incubation participants would have their own companies to run.

Compared to the industrial sector, agriculture is exposed to many more unpredictable risks and uncertainties. Market risk management is critical to the success of agriculture, and yet there is a lack of tools used to manage risks as well as a lack of understanding of the tools themselves.

Market-based instruments for managing agricultural market risks are a practical and non-intervening alternative for managing commodity price volatility.

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Multifunctionality of agriculture goes beyond economics

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This market-based approach differs significantly from the often failing national and international regimes of price controls.

Unfortunately, they have been less embraced in developing countries where institutional strength and lack of awareness of the use of the instruments have deprived these countries of their benefits.

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION — The estimated post-harvest losses of horticultural crops in the Association of Southeast Asian coun-

tries are approximately 30-40 per cent, about two to three times more than losses faced by the developed countries. In Malaysia, the post-harvest losses of paddy were as estimated at 18 per cent. If the losses can be reduced by 5.0-10 per cent, it will make a substantial difference in terms of self-sufficiency and the reduction in import bill. Thus reducing the post-harvest losses will definitely add a sizeable quantity to the food supply, and will facilitate the efforts to mitigate the issues of food security, making food more available

and affordable in the country.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND SAFETY NET — This provides opportunities for producers to take advantage of non-agricultural jobs in rural areas and job opportunities in urban areas as means to improve their wellbeing. In developed economies such as in Taiwan, Korea and Japan, the share of off-farm incomes are high (more than 70 per cent of their total income). Policy options to enhance access to non-agricultural earnings for rural households are likely to include expanding ac-

cess to secondary education and improving infrastructure.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES — It used to be that agriculture is the provider of food, job and income to mankind. However, that paradigm no longer holds under the current context of climate change, environmental degradation, resource depletion, and the concern for food security worldwide. The new theme for agriculture goes beyond its basic functions, but to enhance resource conservation, environment, preserve farm community and to al-

leviate poverty. The multifunctionality of agriculture raises its worth more than just economics.

To move forward, the new government should focus on bigger investment in sustainable production and consumption, agro-entrepreneurship development, effective risk management system, social safety nets, and environmental service concern.

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TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
4/7/2018	THE MALAY MAIL	ONLINE	

Minister: Special task force, multiple committees to study Bernas' replacement

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By Azril Annuar



Agriculture Minister, Salahuddin Ayub, speaks during an exclusive interview with Malay Mail in Putrajaya July 3, 2018. — Picture by Miera Zulyana

PUTRAJAYA, July 4 — The Cabinet has formed a special task force and three committees to look into the new model breaking the rice monopoly once held by Padiberas Nasional Bhd (Bernas).

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Salahuddin Ayub told the *Malay Mail* in an exclusive interview yesterday that his ministry will be in charge of the three committees while the Economic Affairs Ministry will be leading the task force.

"Now I have appointed three parties [to study this issue]. One is spearheaded by my secretary-general," he said, referring to Datuk Mohd Sallehuddin Hassan.

"We are using all the strength and speciality of our ministry to propose the model to replace Bernas.

"Another is from our Advisory Council, I've tasked them on the same issue and finally there is a special task force headed by Selangor Executive Council member on Agriculture Izham Hashim.

"The Cabinet and prime minister has also agreed for six ministries to come on board and also make a proposal on replacing Bernas," Salahuddin said, adding that the Cabinet will study the findings before deciding on the best course of action.

Other ministries in the task force include Salahuddin's own ministry, International Trade and Industries Ministry, Transportation Ministry, Finance Ministry and Health Ministry.

He also pointed out the fact that six ministries coupled with three ministries studying a viable replacement over the Bernas model is an indicator on how much priority the Cabinet has placed on ensuring the nation's food security.

Salahuddin added that food security is his primary concern and focus.

Currently, the committee and the task force is conducting a study and obtaining input from all stakeholders through various means, including town hall meetings.

"We have a rough idea since we have engaged everyone involved. We call all parties from the intellectuals, academicians, corporate players, Bernas, down to the local farmers. All parties, stakeholders will participate. We are conducting our study, we hold town hall meetings, meet all the parties.

"We expect [the report] to complete around the end of August. At the end of our 100 days we must come up with the model to replace Bernas," Salahuddin promised.

Last month, Salahuddin said Putrajaya has terminated the monopoly to import rice by Bernas.

Bernas is scheduled to brief the media in an event today.

PPIS komited bangun sektor pertanian Sarawak

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LONJAKAN SEKTOR PERTANIAN: Heidylia (duduk, tengah), Jocky (duduk, dua kiri) serta ahli PPIS yang lain selesai bermesyuarat di Pejabat Pertanian Bahagian SibU.

SIBU: Pertubuhan Kebajikan Petani Iban Sarawak (PPIS) komited untuk membangunkan sektor pertanian di Sarawak, kata Ketua Pengarah Negeri/Pusat PPIS Jocky Jim Ungka.

Jelasnya, segala perancangan komprehensif serta matlamat dan hala tuju PPIS dalam jangka masa 15 tahun akan datang diharap dapat direalisasikan demi meningkatkan pendapatan rakyat yang masih bergantung kepada sektor tersebut.

“PPIS mempunyai rancangan untuk melaksanakan beberapa projek mega berkenaan dengan industri pertanian di SibU khususnya di mana ia dianggarkan menelan kos sebanyak RM2 juta.

“Kami amat memerlukan jumlah tersebut daripada agensi kerajaan dan juga Kerajaan Sarawak untuk membantu PPIS melaksanakan segala perancangan.

“Dengan adanya dana ber-kenaan, kami yakin industri pertanian akan dapat dirancakkan lagi,” katanya kepada pemberita di sini, kelmarin.

Terdahulu, beliau mengetuai ahli-ahli PPIS mengadakan perjumpaan serta bermesyuarat dengan Jabatan Pertanian Bahagian SibU.

Mesyuarat selama lebih dua jam itu dipengerusikan Pegawai Pertanian Bahagian SibU Heidylia Joshua.

Antara perkara yang dibincangkan dalam mesyuarat tersebut ialah tentang lambakan buah-buahan di pasaran tempatan pada musim buah.

Pihak Jabatan Pertanian Bahagian SibU turut mengemukakan cadangan kepada PPIS agar mencari pembeli atau pembekal dalam membantu penjaja buah-buahan tempatan supaya lambakan buah-buahan dapat diatasi, sekali gus mengelakkan kerugian kepada para penjaja.

PPIS dalam mesyuarat itu turut membentangkan hala tuju dan matlamatnya serta mengemukakan cadangan kepada Heidylia untuk mengadakan kursus pertanian secara percuma kepada semua ahli PPIS.

“Kita turut membentangkan perancangan PPIS untuk masa depan sektor pertanian di SibU kepada Heidylia.

“Beliau bersetuju untuk mewujudkan kerjasama dengan kami,” katanya.

Selain itu katanya, PPIS akan mewujudkan produk makanan berasaskan buah-buahan dalam membantu ekonomi para ahli dan mewujudkan peluang pekerjaan kepada masyarakat tempatan.

“Cadangan dalam mewujudkan produk makanan berasaskan buah-buahan akan dibawa ke mesyuarat bersama dengan Institut Penyelidikan dan Kemajuan Pertanian Malaysia (MARDI) dan surat untuk mengadakan mesyuarat tersebut akan diajukan kepada pihak MARDI di Pejabat Negeri Sarawak setelah mendapat peruntukan kewangan daripada penaja,” ujarnya.

Mengenai fokus PPIS selepas ini jelas Jocky, mereka akan memohon geran RM2 juta daripada Kerajaan Sarawak bagi merealisasikan rancangan mereka.

“Kita amat memerlukan geran kerana tanpa geran, PPIS tidak dapat bergerak dengan sendiri seterusnya berfungsi kepada rakyat.

“PPIS tidak mempunyai sumber kewangan, justeru kami akan mengadakan pertemuan dengan Ketua Menteri Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg serta membentangkan kertas kerja kami berkenaan rancangan komprehensif pertanian.

“Tarikh dan masa akan dimaklumkan kepada pihak media sekiranya mendapat kelulusan daripada pihak Pejabat Ketua Menteri Sarawak untuk berjumpa dengan Abang Johari,” tambahnya.

Dalam perkembangan lain, Jocky melahirkan rasa kecewa dengan segelintir masyarakat kerana memandang serong terhadap kewujudan PPIS.

“PPIS merupakan sebuah pertubuhan yang diwujudkan untuk membantu semua lapisan masyarakat tidak mengira bangsa dan agama.

“Saya amat kecewa apabila ada segelintir masyarakat di luar sana memandang serong terhadap kewujudan PPIS, mereka tidak memahami misi dan visi perjuangan kami di PPIS,” tegasnya.

Beliau dalam pada itu turut menggalakkan semua lapisan masyarakat melibatkan diri secara langsung mahupun tidak langsung dalam PPIS agar misi untuk meningkatkan sektor industri pertanian di Malaysia dapat ditingkatkan lebih baik lagi.

Sementara itu, PPIS telah melantik Barat Intai sebagai pengarah PPIS Bahagian Sibul dan Madeline Mangah sebagai setiausaha PPIS Bahagian Sibul.

Pelantikan tersebut turut mendapat restu daripada Yang Dipertua PPIS Bari Ubi.

Dengan adanya Barat dan Madeline, kata Jocky, mereka dari peringkat ibu pejabat tidak perlu kerap turun padang kerana sudah mempunyai kedua-duanya untuk menguruskan bahagian ini sekali gus menjaga kebajikan ahli-ahlinya.


✎ oleh Watt Zacchaeus

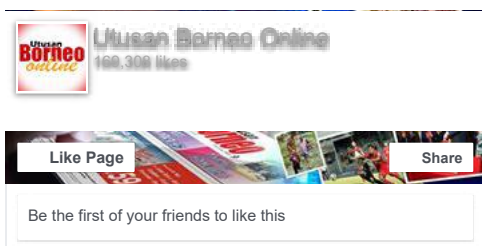
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