

KERATAN AKHBAR

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Govt wants more to benefit from IPR-Intan agriculture initiative, says Rafizi



KUALA LUMPUR: The government is focusing on enabling more people to benefit from the People's Income Initiative Project - Agricultural Entrepreneur Initiative (IPR-Intan), says Rafizi Ramli.

The Economy Minister said that, so far, 445ha of government-owned land nationwide had been opened up for modern agricultural infrastructure under IPR-Intan.

"Recipients nationwide are beginning to engage in modern agriculture that allows the hardcore poor to earn at least RM2,000 per month," he said in the Dewan Negara on Monday (July 29).

He was addressing a question from Senator Abun Sui Anyit about simplifying land ownership requirements for rural and longhouse communities participating in the IPR-Intan programme.

He said the Economy Ministry is also looking into adding more land for the IPR-Intan projects, with suitable terms and agreements to ensure government allocations and investments are protected.

"My concern is that if we simplify things too much without considering certain aspects, particularly regarding ownership, it could lead to exploitation through legal actions and other means," said Rafizi, adding that the unique factors of land ownership in Sabah and Sarawak are also being carefully reviewed.

In response to Senator Hussin Ismail's query about the high premiums imposed on government land, Rafizi explained that the modern agricultural infrastructure requires millions of ringgit in capital and several harvest cycles before the large-scale ventures can be optimised.

He stated that any regulations for setting premiums must ensure that state governments receive sufficient revenue while also allowing for effective development to generate economic benefits.

"This is why when developing Intan, the ministry has taken into account past constraints and failures where land was given to entrepreneurs who lacked the capital to develop it, resulting in either neglected land or land subleased to others," Rafizi explained.

Thus, Rafizi said the government has adopted a better approach where federal and state lands are allocated for a five-year term to develop infrastructure and create jobs on the site.

"This is fully controlled, with capital provided by the government. Ultimately, these assets remain government-owned, allowing participants to be replaced from one cohort to the next," he added. – Bernama