

Agriculture entrepreneurs urged to set sights on China market



Abang Johari (centre) visiting a booth to look at historical files on display at the event. — ZULAZHAR SHEBLEE/The Star

KUCHING: Local entrepreneurs in agriculture and food export have been encouraged to venture into the vast China market.

Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg said it was an opportune time considering that Sarawak was further expanding trade with China under the “One-Belt-One-Road” initiative.

“Sarawak needs to create more strategic partnership to strengthen trade with China.

“With China’s One-Belt-One-Road policy, we can capitalise on its 1.3 billion population by focusing on food export, organic vegetables and other produce,” he said when opening the “One-Belt-One-Road Initiatives: Sarawak’s Challenges and Opportunities” seminar here.

Local entrepreneurs and farmers are welcome to rent a plot of land at these parks to participate in food production for the export market.

The chief minister said the state was looking to further strengthen its bilateral ties with China through exchange of technology. At the same time, the government will enhance connectivity in the state to boost tourism and attract more tourists from China among others.

“Our three areas of focus now are to improve physical connectivity, water grid across the state and cyber-connectivity for high-speed Internet.

“With all these in place, we can strengthen our economic position in the global market,” he added.

At the event, Abang Johari also launched the Sehati Research Institute and Sarawak United People’s Party (SUPP) Resource and Research Centre at its headquarters.

Local Government and Housing Minister Datuk Dr Sim Kui Hian agreed on the need to create more strategic partnerships and strengthen trade with China to boost the state’s economy.

“We must grab every available opportunity considering the strong bilateral ties between China and Malaysia. We must look at all potential products we can export to China and work on producing quality products through technological research.

“At the same time, we bring in more investment, and strengthening our education and technology exchange worldwide,” he said.

Assistant Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture Datuk Lee Kim Shin said the seminar was an inaugural programme organised by the institute.

Lee, who is also the institute’s chairman, said the organisation would collaborate with policy makers and researchers to carry out studies on the latest global economic trend that the state could embrace to strengthen local socio-economy. – By GERYL OGILVY