

S'wak explores hybrid paddy

PETALING JAYA: A pilot project focusing on cultivating hybrid rice in Sarawak has the potential to supply up to 80pc of the State's demand within the next three to five years, according to state premier Abang Johari Openg.

Abang Johari said the location for the project has been identified in Lubok Punggor in Gedong, Tanjung Bijat (Sri Aman), Spaoh (Betong) and Tanjung Purun (Lundu) with a total land area of 10,000 hectares.

"If we plant 10,000 hectares of hybrid padi, we will be able to harvest 200,000 tonnes a year and cater for 80pc of the rice needed in Sarawak," he told reporters after visiting a project site in Kampung Lubok Punggor.

"We want the federal government to assist us in preparing infrastructure and by 2030, maybe Sarawak will become the rice bowl of Malaysia and start exporting rice in the future," he said.

He said the hybrid strain was developed by experts from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) using various types of seedlings from Vietnam with a yield three times more than the normal type, reported - FMT