



17 JUL, 2022

ART TO GO RORAL

New Sunday Tribune, Malaysia



FRUITS OF LABOUR ... Sarawak's emphasis on modern agriculture will ensure the state is a food exporter by 2030. Towards this end, the state will build more agro parks in various locations, focusing on upstream and downstream activities. Similar to industrial parks, the agro parks will be equipped with digital infrastructure. Photo: Ghazali Bujang

ART TO GO RURAL

The current planning for the Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) system has two lines; one ends in Serian while another one in Kampung Rembus, Kota Samarahan. According to Premier Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg, Gedong seems to be the 'missing link' between the two lines — thus, the government is looking into having the ART pass through Gedong as well. This will ensure that Sarawak's food baskets are connected by dual carriageway.

• Stories by **Goh Pei Pei** on **pages 4 & 5**

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Rural farming key to meeting urban needs

GEDONG: A more hands-on approach in rural areas is needed to increase Sarawak's agricultural yields.

Youth, Sports and Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah said this is crucial to accommodate the growing population of large cities such as Kuching.

"Kuching City and its suburbs are now getting more populated. They are in need of fresh produce and these supplies cannot be obtained from places far away from the city.

"That is why in any city whose inhabitants cannot cultivate fresh produce, they need its surrounding areas to send in their produce.

"That is why the urban belt area plays quite an important role in feeding those who live in the city," he said at the National Anti-Drug Day Commemoration and the Jualan Terus Dari Ladang Keluarga Malaysia Negeri Sarawak 2022 Programme, here on Saturday.

Abdul Karim noted that the areas of Samarahan including Gedong are suitable to be transformed into 'food belt' areas to accommodate Kuching City.

"Given the growing number of connections and infrastructure, it is easier for farmers and fishermen to sell their crops and seafood."

He also lamented the lack of agricultural processing facilities in the areas of Samarahan.

"This needs to be scrutinised at the federal and state levels because through this we will be able to see



ABANG Johari interacts with people buying government subsidised goods at the Mini MAHA 2022 Gedong stall. Seen behind the Premier is Abdul Karim and FAMA officials.

an increase in those who want to get involved in the agriculture industry," he explained.

He said there were also complaints from local farmers that the cost of harvesting their produce outweighs the profit made from selling.

"That is why we need to see

ways to regulate this equilibrium so that existing agricultural products do not become wasted," he added.

PEOPLE scrambling to buy basic government subsidised items at the Mini MAHA 2022 Gedong stall.





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SUMMARIES

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