

Agrobusiness boost if unity govt takes over Kedah

ALOR SETAR: Agrobusiness is among five matters that will be given focus in Kedah if unity government coalition parties are given the mandate to administer the state, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He added that *tahfiz* schools, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), water supply and telecommunication services would also be given special attention to develop human capital and boost development.

"The focus on agrobusiness will involve not only food security and maintaining Kedah's position as a rice bowl state. It also means enhancing productivity among padi entrepreneurs.

"For this, Mada (Muda Agricultural Development Authority) will definitely find new methodologies to increase productivity. Padi farms should be helped not only in terms of padi price but also fertilisers and other

○ *Tahfiz* schools, TVET, water supply and telecommunication services to also be given special focus to develop human capital, promote development: Zahid

kinds of aid," he said after launching the Kedah State Unity Convention here yesterday.

Also present were Kedah Pakatan Harapan chairman Datuk Mahfuz Omar and Kedah Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid, Bernama reported.

Regarding *tahfiz* schools, Ahmad Zahid said their students in Kedah would be assisted in achieving a higher level of education, especially in TVET, apart from maintaining their command of Quran studies.

"I have mentioned that the federal government is committed to helping all *tahfiz* school students

without marginalising Chinese schools and other types of schools. This means helping *tahfiz* schools to achieve a higher academic level.

"UniKL (Universiti Kuala Lumpur) and other universities under the Rural and Regional Development Ministry are committed to helping them to go all the way to PhD level," he said, adding that there are about 9,000 *tahfiz* school students in Kedah.

Ahmad Zahid said some *tahfiz* schools in Kedah are still unregistered and that the government will help them to do so.

On TVET, he said the focus will

be on establishing a TVET college under the Kedah Regional Development Authority and strengthening existing TVET institutions.

"For the 1,291 TVET institutions throughout the country, the government spent RM6.8 billion. Surely, Kedah will not be marginalised. We will empower it with several enhancement programmes and courses relevant to manpower needs of the market," he said.

On water, Ahmad Zahid gave an assurance that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim would personally handle the issue of domestic water supply while telecommunication services in rural areas would be strengthened, including having 5G coverage.

"I have stressed that rural areas should be part of roaming 5G coverage. I myself will be monitoring to see to it. This is our determination if we take over Kedah (in state polls this year)."