



Shafie (third left), Noh (third right) and other guests at the launching of the Sabah Seaweed Cluster Project and the show to promote the biennial Malaysian Agriculture, Horticulture & Agrotourism exposition in Semporna yesterday morning.

## Sabah Seaweed Cluster Project launched in Semporna

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**SEMPORNA:** The Sabah Seaweed Cluster Project launched here yesterday will be part of a high-impact sector by 2020, said Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar.

He said based on the plans for the National Key Economic Area (NKEA) project, the seaweed industry in Sabah, especially in Semporna which has been recognised as a national seaweed producing district, will be transformed into an important national industry.

“We want to make it a high-impact programme, and although it was previously carried out traditionally on a small scale, today we are planning on a value chain not just in the technology of production but also upstream products.

“Seaweed can be processed into beauty care ingredients, our plan is not just to help fishermen, but we must also have a seaweed processing plant and a national research institute,” he told reporters after launching the project here yesterday together with a show to promote the biennial Malaysian Agriculture, Horticulture & Agrotourism (MAHA)

exposition.

This year’s MAHA event will be held on Nov 23-Dec 2 at Serdang, Selangor.

Also present were Rural and Regional Development Minister cum Semporna member of parliament Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal and Sabah Assistant Agriculture and Food Industries Minister Datuk Musbah Jamli, representing the minister, Datuk Yahya Hussin.

Noh said seaweed production in the project is expected to rise to 900,000 metric tonnes a year with an export value of RM1.4 billion.

The government has allocated RM46 million to Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to implement a seaweed mini estate project and RM8.3 million to about 300 participants of the seaweed cluster project under the Agriculture Department. ♦ Continued in A2. Col.2

# Road maintenance aid used for other purposes

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The UMS project encompasses 11 groups in Semporna, Kunak, Lahad Datu and Tawau, while there are four groups in the cluster project.

Noh said the government had allocated RM17 million for research and development projects by Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia and UMS.

Meanwhile, Shafie told reporters that the bulk of the federal government road maintenance aid to opposition-held Selangor and Kelantan had been used for some other purposes.

Only a small portion of the

allocations had been utilised for maintenance of roads in the two states, he said, pointing out that the unfriendly ties between the federal and state governments undermined the federal government help to bring development for the people.

The cold relationship between the federal and Selangor governments was obstructing efforts to build the Langat 2 water treatment plant, he said.

Shafie added that a project of his ministry to supply water to the Orang Asli community in Gua Musang, Kelantan, had run into problems due to the poor relationship with the state government.

He also said that at one time

when the government in Sabah was not aligned with the federal government, development in the state suffered due to difficulty in getting funds from the federal government.

Shafie therefore advised the people to be beware of the opposition who had been making promises through various tactics to woo the people to vote for them in the upcoming election.

Such tactics were not a proper tool to gain support from the people, he said.

"Thus, it is important for every individual to be carefully aware of it and should never get easily influenced by the opposition propaganda," he added.