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Agong - Birthday

DON'T LET FOREIGN POWERS DICTATE FATE OF NATION, SAYS KING

KUALA LUMPUR, June 5 (Bernama) -- The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar tonight called on Malaysians to increase productivity and give full backing to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to steer the country towards full recovery from the current economic problems.

"This is not the time for the people to give up hope and to let foreign powers dictate the fate of the nation," the King said in his birthday address to the nation broadcast over radio and television.

"I am very much satisfied with all the efforts being undertaken by the government under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

"I believe and am confident that the bold and firm steps initiated by the government will bring good to the people and country, God willing," he said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said he was pleased with the people's support for the government's endeavours towards that end so far and reminded them that the current situation called for sacrifices and thrift on their part.

"We cannot afford to be spending like the way we did before. Instead we should strive to increase national savings to consolidate the country's reserves. It is my hope that all Malaysians remain patient in going through this tribulation," his majesty said.

His majesty said the ringgit's depreciation and slump in the stock market, resulting from moves designed by foreigners, were unpredictable.

"Nonetheless let our present difficulties be a lesson to us all," his majesty said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said even way back to his birthday address to the nation two years ago, he had stressed that it was the level of advancement and economic might and not the size of the military that determined a country's strength.

This holds true today, his majesty said, as foreigners applied their economic powers to cripple developing economies like Malaysia and destroyed whatever progress the nation had achieved thus far.

Tuanku Ja'afar said in the wake of the country's economic problems it was crucial that all parties preserve the prevailing unity and refrain from compounding the difficulties by creating ill-feelings towards each other.

"Now it is not the time for us to be selfish. We should be helping each other to go through the current hard times as we'll only be a strong society if we are all united," he said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said for continued national prosperity Malaysians should be constantly sensitive to the customs and religious peculiarities of the various racial groups so that harmonious co-existence and tolerance could be preserved and enhanced.

His majesty said retrenched workers should be patient and in the meantime avoid being choosy about taking up alternative jobs available.

The current economic problems should not be an excuse for remaining inert but should instead prompt the people to put in greater efforts, Tuanku Ja'afar said.

The King also advised Malaysians to attend to and check issues which were often linked to economic collapse from causing the social fabric to disintegrate.

Tuanku Ja'afar also reminded Malaysians to come out in full support of the 16th Commonwealth Games to be held here in September.

"The world's focus then will be on Malaysia. This is the moment for us

to show the world that we are a progressive and civilised society," his majesty said.

Besides filling up the stadium and other games venues, Malaysians should maintain high level of cleanliness and refrain from resorting to acts that could smear Malaysia's image, he said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said he was proud of the commitment shown by Malaysians who have volunteered their services to make the Games a success.

-- BERNAMA

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