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Sultan: Don't allow political differences to disunite people

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KLANG, Wed. - The Sultan of Selangor has urged politicians to ensure that political differences do not lead to disunity among the people.

He said political differences were to be expected in a multi-racial and multi-religious society but these should not be allowed to cause a rift among people.

The Sultan expressed the hope that the current political stability would continue so that attention could be given to efforts to tackle economic problems.

"We are now facing a difficult time and I hope everyone can work together and work harder to help overcome it.

"I have full confidence in the ability of the Government to pull us through these bad times," he said, adding that he was also confident that the Selangor State Government could still fulfil its vision of becoming a fully industrialised State by 2005.

The Sultan said this at a State banquet in conjunction with his 73rd birthday celebrations at the Istana Alam Shah here last night.

Also present at the dinner were Tengku Permaisuri Selangor Tengku Aishah, the Raja Muda of Selangor, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar and his wife Datin Seri Wan Noor Daud, Defence Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar and National Unity and Social Development Minister Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail.

Abu Hassan, in his pledge of loyalty to the Sultan, said his administration would do its best to minimise the impact of negative developments on the State.

He said the State Government was confident about the success of various measures already taken to project a positive growth of 2.16 per cent this year.

This was despite being plagued by various problems including a water crisis, the haze, forest fires and the current economic problems.

Abu Hassan said Selangor's contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product remained the highest at over 20 per cent despite posting a negative growth of minus 1.54 per cent last year.

"The State Government is also confident of its ability to face new challenges based on our preparedness in all fields, including economic performance, political stability and the welfare of the people.

"At the same time, we will work harder to counter efforts by certain groups of people who are out to discredit the State," he added.

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