

14 JULY 2001

Assembly-Sultan

SULTAN REMINDS BN COMPONENT PARTIES TO UNITE, AVOID SPLITS

JOHOR BAHRU, July 14 (Bernama) -- The Sultan of Johor today reminded component parties of Barisan Nasional (BN) to unite and avoid splits within the coalition.

Umno and political parties within BN should unite instead of causing splits, he said when opening the third term of the State Legislative Assembly sitting, here today.

He said negative elements and those endeavouring to cause racial splits from outside must be prevented from spreading to the state.

The people must preserve solidarity and uphold their respective religious beliefs as provided for under the Rukun Negara for the sake of racial harmony in the state, the Sultan said.

He said peace and harmony were also important ingredients in the country's economic development.

He urged the people to support the government at all times and to unite and refrain from using religion as a tool merely to gain influence to the extent that there were splits in the community and deviations in terms of faith and Islamic teachings.

He thanked the federal government under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who had cooperated and supported the Johor government.

The Sultan said early and immediate action taken by the federal government had managed to revive the national economy when there was an increase in the economic growth at 5.8 per cent in 1999.

Last year, economic growth continued to increase to eight per cent and at the end of this year the growth had stabilised to five per cent as a result of the drop in the economic growth of the United States.

The Sultan had earlier inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by members of the Johor Military Force. The State Assembly will sit again on Monday until July 24.

--BERNAMA

RAM AO