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Natural resources, 'pull' factors help Negri to shine

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KUALA PILAH, Sat. - The close co-operation between the State and Federal Governments has helped ensure Negri Sembilan's continued peace and prosperity, Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Ja'afar said today.

The positive economic growth and development enjoyed by the State should be preserved by the people, by uniting and working together with the State Government, he said.

Tuanku Ja'afar said this at an investiture in conjunction with his 81st birthday at Istana Besar Seri Menanti here.

He said he was confident that the incidence of poverty, which had been rapidly declining in the State, would be eradicated.

He said he was pleased that basic facilities were easily available to the people and more should be done to attract investors to the State, which was blessed with natural resources and its own "pull" factors.

The Ruler said the State should not depend entirely on the industrial sector but instead further develop the agriculture sector, as diversity would ensure economic stability.

Tuanku Ja'afar stressed the importance of education in producing more skilled and trained workers, something which would further attract investors.

He also said the State's unique "Adat Perpatih" culture should be exploited to a higher level to bring in more visitors and tourists.

He was accompanied by the Tengku Ampuan Negri Sembilan Tuanku Najihah at the ceremony today. Also present were Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad and wife Puan Sri Azizah Tumin, state executive councillors, assemblymen and other dignitaries.

A total of 884 people will receive awards in conjunction with the birthday celebrations.

Heading the list of recipients today was former Felda chairman Tan Sri Raja Muhammad Alias Raja Mohd Ali, who was conferred the State's highest award, the Darjah Seri Utama Negri Sembilan (SPNS) which carries the title "Datuk Seri Utama".

Army chief Datuk Wira Mohd Shahrom Nordin and Syarikat Pesaka Antah Sdn Bhd director Datin Seri Tunku Mimi Wahida Tunku Wahman, who is also Tuanku Ja'afar's daughter-in-law, were conferred the Darjah Seri Paduka Tuanku Ja'afar Yang Amat Terpuji (SPTJ), which carries the title "Datuk Seri".

Twenty-seven were bestowed the Darjah Dato Setia Negri Sembilan (DSNS), which carries the title "Datuk".

Among them were State Youth and Sports Committee chairman Zakaria Nordin, State Consumer Affairs Committee chairman T. Rajagopal, State Social, Women Affairs and Family Development Committee chairman Norhayati Omar, Istana Seri Menanti chief of ceremony Tunku Azman Tunku Borhan, Bahau State Assemblyman See Ah Kow, Bioven Holdings Sdn Bhd chief executive Mukhriz Mahathir, Rasah Umno division chief and Cycle and Carriage Bintang Bhd managing director Datuk Mohamad Hassan, Urban and Rural Development director-general Abdul Mutalib Jelani and Anti-Corruption Agency intelligence director Abdul Malik Sheikh Abdullah.

Another 31 were bestowed the Darjah Dato Paduka Tuanku Ja'afar (DPTJ) which also carries the title "Datuk".

They included Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Bhd chief executive Ahmad Farid Ridzuan, State Department of Irrigation and Drainage director R. Batumalai, veteran artiste and film director Mustapha Maarof, Penang legal

adviser Hinshawati Shariff and Radio Televisyen Malaysia deputy director-general (broadcasting) Abdul Rahman Hamid.

Twenty-seven were bestowed the Darjah Setia Negri Sembilan (DNS), 22 the Pingat Pekerti Terpilih (PPT), 22 the Jaksa Pendamai (JP), 122 the Ahli Negri Sembilan (ANS), 247 the Pingat Khidmat cemerlang (PMC), 360 the Pingat Jasa Kebaktian (PJK) and 22 the Pingat Khidmat Lama (PKL).