

Agong urges environmental protection in light of climate change

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PARLIAMENT | Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah has urged the government to preserve at least 50 percent of the country's land area as forested areas.

Speaking in his royal address when opening the first meeting of the Fifth Session of the 14th Parliament today, he said environmental protection and sustainability must be one of the country's priorities in light of the threat posed by climate change.

"Our people must always be vigilant and concerned about the importance of ensuring cleanliness and safety in their respective areas.

"We urge the government to ensure that at least 50 percent of the country's land area will remain covered with forested areas and trees through the implementation of sustainable forest management practices.

"In addition, areas that have the potential to be recognised as geoparks should be maintained and protected," the Agong said.

To effectively face uncertainties in the future caused by environmental degradation and climate change, he said the country's disaster management mechanisms must be constantly improved.

The king added that these mechanisms must also be enhanced to include cross-social roles and the responsibilities of the government, private, civil society organisations and volunteers, especially from the youth and public.

"At the same time, the coordination between the federal and state governments and local authorities should be continued.

"The development of a centralised disaster warning system and improvements to drainage systems, especially in densely populated and high-risk areas, must be further intensified," he said.

Short and long-term actions

The ruler also urged for short and long-term measures, including flood-mitigation infrastructure readiness as agreed upon by the Central Disaster

Management Committee meeting, to be undertaken immediately.

"The cleaning of public areas and maintenance of flood mitigation facilities should be undertaken regularly.

"We believe that the strategies that have been formulated will make the nation's economy more sustainable, innovative and competitive as well as create new opportunities for economic growth," he said.

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