

'Knowledge is the key'

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Break away from poverty and ignorance, says King

KUALA LUMPUR: The King has called on Muslims in the country to equip themselves with knowledge as a way to free themselves from the shackles of ignorance, backwardness, ruin and poverty.

Knowledge, he stressed, led people to transformation, success and advancement, and brought physical and spiritual comfort and prosperity.

He said the best example for Muslims was how Prophet Muhammad eradicated moral decadence and the corruption of beliefs among ignorant Arabs, and emphasised the value of knowledge instead.

"He was successful in producing knowledgeable individuals capable of generating an excellent future for Islam," said Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Ibni Al-Marhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail in his speech at the *Maulidur Rasul* celebrations at Stadium Negara yesterday.

Also present were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the knowledge the Holy Prophet received and imparted to mankind was not limited to basic needs, it was also capable of bringing changes to resolve contemporary issues.

Islam, he pointed out, placed

a culture of knowledge as the foremost agenda in every single aspect of life.

"We will lose out and it will be a tragedy if we fail to conform to his legacy in our lives, in a century which demands the *ummah* (the people) to strive and be competitive to build development and civilisation," he said.

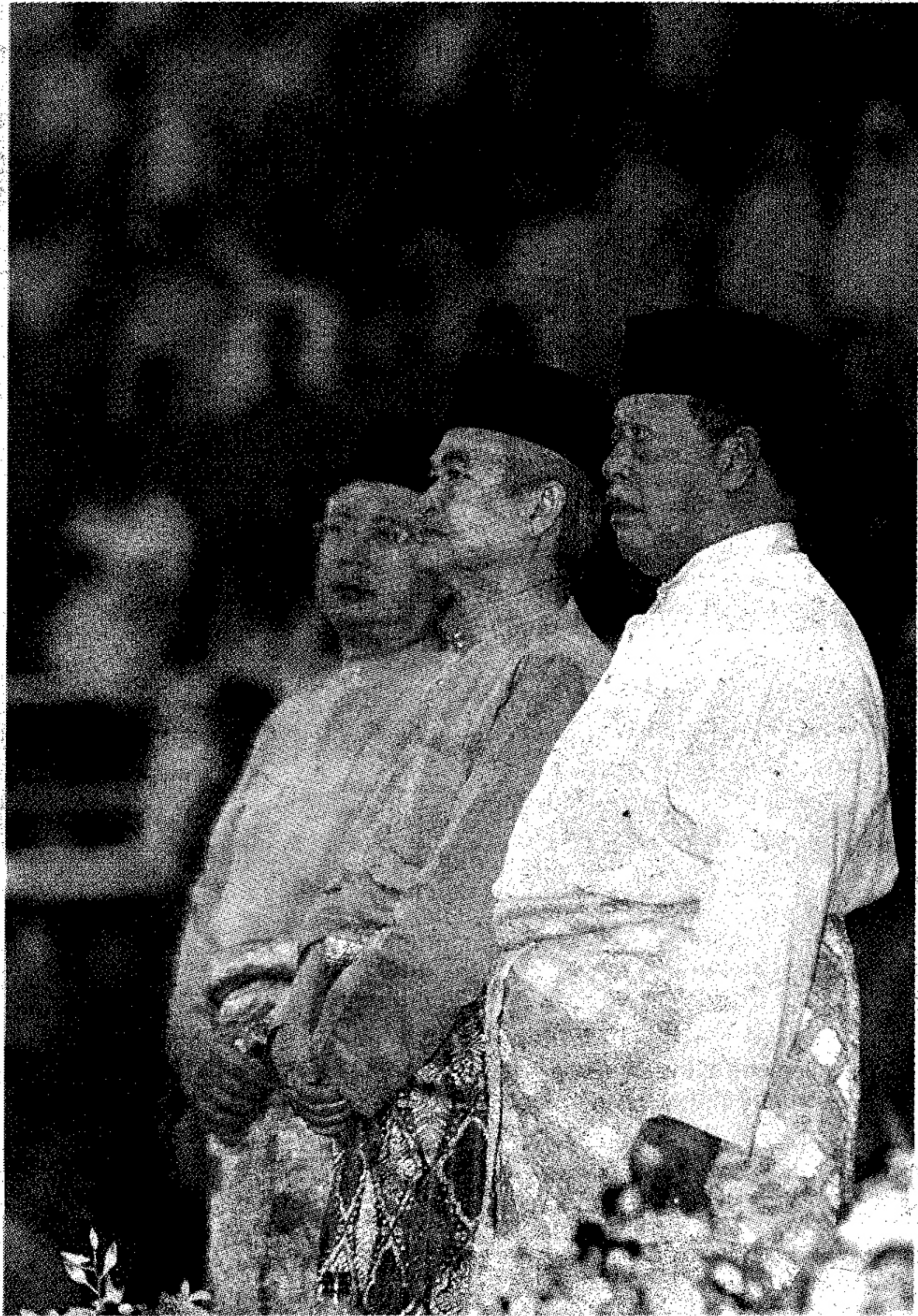
The King said the government, realising this, had implemented various strategies to produce a knowledgeable *ummah*.

Making Malaysia an exemplary Islamic nation, he added, was the government's main agenda as shown in the 9th Malaysia Plan where the development of human capital was a key foundation.

"Armed with this asset, I am confident that by the year 2020, God willing, Malaysia will become a balanced developed nation with people possessing outstanding identity, and who are steadfast in their religion, making Malaysia a progressive, world-class Muslim country," he said.

Earlier at 7am, about 4,000 Muslims walked 3km from Dataran Merdeka to Stadium Negara for the celebrations.

Similar celebrations were held in all states and were launched by their respective heads of state.



ROYAL PRESENCE: The King with Abdullah and Najib at the National *Maulidur Rasul* celebrations at Stadium Negara yesterday.