

THE STAR

DATE: 22/1/2010

Sultan: Respect and accept each other

MARAN: The different ethnic groups must be an asset to help Malaysia turn into a developed country, said Sultan of Pahang Sultan Ahmad Shah Sultan Abu Bakar.

Tuanku called on Malaysians to respect and accept each other.

"National unity should be based on the principles in the Constitution, and the willingness to accept all races as Malaysians.

"The various ethnic groups should be an asset for us to become a developed country," he said when opening a forum on Malay rights and unity in the context of 1Malaysia at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Pahang, Bandar Jengka here yesterday.

The Sultan warned the people that the globalisation process could also affect national unity.

"Without a proper mechanism to face the challenges, it can also destabilise the country," he said

Also present were Tengku Mahkota of Pahang Tengku Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah; UiTM vice-chancellor Datuk Prof

Ir Dr Sahol Hamid Abu Bakar and UiTM Pahang director Associate Professor Datuk Dr Hilmi Ab Rahman.

As for Malay unity, the Sultan said other races should not view it as a threat because it could lead the country to achieve Vision 2020.

Sultan Ahmad Shah said it was also important for the Malays to understand their rights.

"Under the Constitution, the Malays have their special rights and it also states the position of Islam as the official religion."

The Sultan also said the 1Malaysia concept could help strengthen national integration.

The Sultan later told reporters that he had yet to receive the memorandum against the use of the word "Allah" by other religions from Pahang non-governmental organisations.

"I have to listen to all views before making my statement. I also hope the media could also play their role by not sensationalising the issue," he said.