

King praises economic showing and women, haze makes history in Parliament

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By Jennifer Gomez and Elizabeth Zachariah

The haze caused history of sorts yesterday when the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah was forced to inspect the guard of honour indoors for the first time at the opening of Parliament.

The King did the inspection in the banquet hall before giving his Royal Address at the start of the 13th Parliament of Malaysia today.

In his speech, the King called on all parties to accept and respect the results of the 13th General Election for the sake of the country. "It was carried out according to the democratic process and we now have to work together to bring the nation to greater heights, achieving the developed nation status by 2020," he said in his opening address.

He also offered his condolences to families of armed forces who lost their loved ones while defending the country during the recent Sulu intrusion in Lahad Datu. - June 25, 2013.

His Majesty congratulated the elected members of parliament and urged them to serve the people with dedication and integrity.

Pointing out the progress he had seen throughout his first and second reign, the King said he that he was proud to be able to witness Malaysia increase its global competitiveness in recent years.

"Despite the economic unrest in Europe last year, our country has managed to stay on a strong economic path.

"Surpassing the 2 per cent poverty level target by 2015, we achieved 1.7 per cent last year."

Under the Dasar Komoditi Negara, he said the country will be looking at increasing commodities export earnings from RM13 billion in 2010 to RM242 billion in 2020.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong also praised women for their contribution to the country's economy, adding that the Government was looking at increasing the number of women decision-makers in the corporate sector to 30 per cent.

"We will also aim to increase the overall number of women in the workforce to 55 per cent by 2015."

He said the public service had succeeded in playing an important role in realising the National Transformation Policy that covers the Government's transformation programme, economy, politic and social.

He said these programmes have succeeded in contributing significantly to economic development and national harmony.

He expressed hope that that civil servants will continue with efforts to improve the delivery system based on three aspects: efficient service, accuracy and integrity, apart from creative

thinking, innovative and an emphasis on productivity.

The King also said that the Felda Transformation Programme will continue to enhance education and training programmes for the new generation so that they become more skilled and innovative.

Priority will be given to peace and security and the Government will work towards closing the gap between the perception and the reality of safety in the country, he said.

It is also committed to preserving the dignity of Islam based on Syariah principles and its position as the official religion. As such, he hoped that the position Of Islam will not be questioned by any persons to the point of subverting the faith. He called on the nation to be rid of divisive factors and instead focus on factors to enhance national unity. - June 25, 2013.

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