

King extends support to families of passengers on missing MAS flight
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By Jennifer Gomez

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, in his Royal Address at the opening of the second session of the 13th Parliament, has expressed his sympathy and support to the families of the 239 passengers and crew of the missing Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flight MH370.

The King hoped that the families will be able to persevere and remain calm through this ordeal.

In his address, he also reminded Malaysians that Islam is the religion of the Federation and urged religious authorities to quickly deal with the spread of deviant teachings, and follow Sunni Islam to ensure Muslims in the country remain united.

"Stern action must be taken against bad elements who try and spread their thinking for the purpose of destroying good values set in the Constitution.

"All parties need to realise the importance of unity and return to the path on which the county was founded as intended by past leaders," the Agong said.

He said to ensure unity and harmony among the people, the government had set up the National Unity Consultative Council to find consensus on various religious and ethnic issues.

As such, he called on all quarters to refrain from making provocative statements or actions.

"When unity is compromised, the country would be destroyed. We need to strengthen unity and practise respect and moderation in daily living," he said.

The King also called on the government and MPs to give better understanding to the public on the benefits of goods and services tax (GST), which will take effect in April 2015, to explain that it was not an additional tax but merely replacing the current sales and services tax.

He said that he was happy to note MPs raising issues to be debated in Parliament, adding that the cooperation shown by them has resulted in the successful passing of laws and motions that touched on the lives of Malaysians.

He added that this proved the maturity of the democratic system and the government's willingness to listen and consider suggestions from all parties for the betterment of the country.
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