

**Govt Must Ensure All Malaysians Have Good Command Of National Language - Sultan Nazrin
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IPOH, March 31 (Bernama) -- The Sultan of Perak Sultan Nazrin Shah today called on the government to ensure that all Malaysians will have good command of national language.

He said the federal government's openness on the usage of other language as the language of instruction at schools did not mean that they could turn a blind eye on this aspect.

"What is the purpose of being a citizen of a country if you cannot understand or even speak the national language," he said when opening the first meeting of the third term of the 13th State Assembly here today.

Sultan Nazrin Shah said language played an important role as a medium of communication which was essential to foster unity and strengthen existing ties.

He also said that every school, especially the non national-type school, had great responsibility to inculcate patriotism and nurture civic knowledge among the students.

"There is no use if a school managed to produce many excellent students, but with the students having no knowledge on the foundation of nationhood and poor national language proficiency," he said.

In his opening speech, the Sultan of Perak also touched on the recent floods that affected the lives of 400,000 people and incurred a loss of RM2.9 billion due to damage caused to infrastructures.

In Perak, the affected areas were Hulu Perak, Kerian, Kuala Kangsar, Perak Tengah, Manjung and Hilir Perak.

"I have personally witnessed the damage caused by the floods," he said.

Therefore, he said the state and federal governments need to formulate a long-term master plan to tackle flood woes.

"Existing logistics assets should be increased and upgraded to facilitate communication and rescue activities," he said.

Sultan Nazrin Shah also expressed his appreciation to all those who came forward to provide assistance to the flood victims.

He also lauded the state government's effort in setting up a port authority, saying that it was a right move because there was no special body that would monitor and regulate shipping activities.

He said due to rapid industrial development in coastal areas of Perak, especially in Manjung, it was the right time to set up the port authority.

Sultan Nazrin Shah also noted that urban and rural areas planning should be coordinated with the development doctrine which rested on three pillars - the relationship between man and his Creator, relationship among human and the environment.

"Recycling programme should be intensified, manufacturing sector should be encouraged and offered incentives for using green and clean technologies.

"Strict enforcement to control the quality of the environment and to prevent illegal deforestation should also be implemented," he said.

The Sultan of Perak said the state government would also promote and encourage more Bumiputera participation in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as there was only 20 per cent Bumiputera-owned SMEs registered in the state.

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