

King praises new government for upholding transparency

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 17 (Bernama) -- The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Muhammad V, today opened the first meeting of the first session of the 14th Parliament, and praised the new government for upholding transparency.

His Majesty made particular reference to the government's revealing of the actual financial position of the country, its review of expenditure and costs of projects and its prudent financial management.

The King expressed support for the government action in abolishing the Goods and Services Tax (GST), stabilising fuel prices and providing a cost-of-living allowance to target groups, which he felt would ease the financial burden of the people.

"At the same time, I appreciate the contributions of the people, regardless of religious beliefs, race and age, to Tabung Harapan Negara in a show of concern for the country," he said in his royal address. The Tabung Harapan Negara trust fund was set up to enable the people to help ease the financial burden of the nation.

The Pakatan Harapan coalition of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), PKR, DAP and Amanah took over the federal government after its stunning victory in the 14th General Election on May 9 when it dislodged the Barisan Nasional (BN) that had ruled the country for 61 years since independence.

On May 24, the new government revealed that Malaysia's debt had reached RM1.08 trillion or 80.3 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product as of Dec 31 last year.

As a result, the government introduced measures to reduce spending in line with the

country's actual financial position and review the implementation and cost of certain projects.

The Pakatan Harapan government also slashed the GST to zero per cent and vowed to eventually abolish the tax and replace it with the sales and service tax as promised in its election manifesto.

In his address, Sultan Muhammad V congratulated Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on his appointment as the Prime Minister and the leadership he had appointed to spearhead the country's administration as well as the MPs elected in the last general election.

"I hope the Honourable Members of the House will participate in the debates in a healthy and mature manner and in a way to stimulate thought," he said.

The King also said that they should provide suggestions and prudent and wise criticism with courtesy so that Parliament continued to be respected and held with high regard by the people and the outside world.

His Majesty said that following the historic outcome of the last general election, all quarters should abide by the decision of the people and not become emotional and consider actions and thinking inclined towards slander and narrow-minded sentiments.

"I hope all quarters strive towards sincere transparency and earnestly work towards establishing genuine solidarity. Seek out similarities, not differences, and cooperate for the well-being of the people and survival of the nation," he said.

His Majesty said he hoped that all the successes, achievements and recognitions of the country in the various fields could be enhanced.

To achieve that, he suggested that the government, private sector and the people continue to work together in organising society, especially in improving the economic position of the

people who remained marginalised.

Improving the economy of the marginalised people should not be seen as racial discrimination but as an attempt to redress the social injustice that has been inherited, he said.

Sultan Muhammad V also touched on the challenges faced by the people and country, such as the global economic situation, political conflicts, humanitarian crises at the international level, the threat of radicalism and the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0.

As such, I welcome any initiative through the formulation of policies, strategies and legislative frameworks to deal with these. I hope the benefits derived are not just in the economic aspect but also cover the social and other aspects, he said.

The King said that adherence to religious teachings and noble values should not be neglected and all quarters should be more serious in dealing with social and negative elements that could harm society and the country.

In this regard, all levels of society, government organisations, non-governmental organisations and intellectuals have to come together to discuss and find solutions to the problems that arise, he said.

His Majesty called for the maintenance and strengthening of unity among the people, the eradication of negative elements and actions that undermined integration and a halt to the raising of racially sensitive issues.

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