

PM Lee Urges Singaporeans To Uphold Unity For A Successful Future
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SINGAPORE, Jan 22 (Bernama) -- Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has called on Singaporeans to uphold unity and be "psychologically prepared" in the wake of global economic uncertainty.

In his Chinese New Year message, Lee said: "If we continue to stand together as one united people, we can face the future with confidence and resolve."

"Regardless of our race or origin, all of us have helped build Singapore to what it is today. Our unity and cohesion through the trials and tribulations of our young history have been critical to our success," he said.

He pointed out that strong families were the foundation of a cohesive, harmonious society.

"These roles our families play are even more critical in today's environment. The Year of the Rabbit has been eventful. The Year of the Dragon is likely to see more uncertainty in the global economy," he warned.

Fortunately, the prime minister said Asia is still prospering, but Singapore is already feeling the slowdown in the West.

"This is one of the reasons we project one to three per cent growth this year. It will be prudent for us to be psychologically prepared."

Lee stressed that one important priority Singapore is "to grow our families."

Singapore's total fertility rate has been steadily dropping from 1.60 in 2000 to 1.20 in 2011, despite many government measures to encourage couples to have more children.

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