

PARLIAMENT

MALAYSIA

**ROYAL ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY
SERI PADUKA BAGINDA YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG XVI
AL-SULTAN ABDULLAH RI'AYATUDDIN
AL-MUSTAFA BILLAH SHAH
IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN HAJI AHMAD SHAH
AL-MUSTA'IN BILLAH**

**THE THIRD SESSION
OF THE FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT
18 MAY 2020**

**Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Rahiim, Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alamin
Wassolaatu Wassalaamu 'Ala Asyrafil Anbiyaa' Wal Mursaliin,
Wa'ala Aalihi Wa Sohbihi Ajma'in. Rabbish rahli sadri,
Wayassirli amri, Wahlul uqdatan min lisaani, Yafqahu qauli.**

**Assalamualaikum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh and
Greetings.**

**President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of
Representatives, Members of the Senate and Members of the
House of Representatives.**

Alhamdulillah, We express Our utmost gratitude to Allah the Almighty for His Leave and Munificence that we are gathered here today for the Opening Ceremony of the Third Session of the Fourteenth Parliament. It is even more meaningful with this ceremony taking place during the month of Ramadan, a month full of blessings and the most eminent of all months.

2. This morning's ceremony is being conducted under slightly different conditions than usual. Our nation is currently still endeavouring to combat the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak that first afflicted Malaysians in early February. However, we confronted and managed to address this outbreak by uniting as a strong, determined and disciplined Malaysian nation. At this critical moment, our frontline personnel, especially of the healthcare services, the Malaysian Armed Forces, the Royal Malaysia Police, the Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia, the

Immigration Department of Malaysia, the National Disaster Management Agency, the Malaysia Civil Defence Force, the Volunteers Department of Malaysia and other agencies involved have shown great dedication in facing this outbreak. They have made inexhaustible sacrifices despite the concerns that their own lives and personal safety would be at stake in protecting the well-being and interests of the people.

Honourable Members,

3. On 24 February 2020, the narrative of the nation's political landscape was stirred again following the resignation of the 7th Prime Minister of Malaysia. At around five in the evening of that day, We granted an audience to the Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad. During the audience, We requested the Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad not to resign. However, Tun was firm in his decision.

4. As such, We had the responsibility of appointing a new Prime Minister as stipulated in the Federal Constitution. Article 43 states that We have the discretion to appoint a Member of the House of Representatives who in Our judgement commands the confidence of the majority of members of the House of Representatives.

5. Following that, on 25 and 26 February 2020, We personally interviewed individual members of the House of Representatives to ascertain their positions. On 29 February 2020, We requested all political parties with members in the House of Representatives to nominate a member among them as the next Prime Minister. At the request of

several political leaders, We agreed to extend the time period for the political parties to submit their nominations so as to allow them enough time to decide in a democratic manner.

6. Without doubt, all competitions must be concluded. The political turmoil afflicting a country cannot be allowed to continue and fester indefinitely. Therefore, after going through all these processes and in accordance with the Federal Constitution, We concluded that the Right Honourable Tan Sri Muhyiddin bin Haji Yassin has gained the confidence from the majority of the House of Representatives and, with that, was thus appointed the 8th Prime Minister of Malaysia.

7. Indeed, We have executed the trust in a just and transparent manner in accordance with the principle of a Constitutional Monarchy and parliamentary democracy that forms the foundation of our nation. At the same time, We appreciate the maturity and cooperation of all Honourable Members and the people who have played their roles with such prudence and ethics in enabling Us to fulfil this trust. To Our Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Tan Sri Muhyiddin bin Haji Yassin, We are fully confident that the endeavours to raise the nation to greater heights will become a reality. Our advice is that this trust should be exercised honestly and responsibly, and not to ever neglects the well-being of the people.

Honourable Members,

8. Indeed, the challenges that the nation faces today emanate from various aspects. The country is now facing the uncertain global economic conditions, fall in crude oil prices, trade wars particularly between the United States and People's Republic of China, restrictions and trade barriers imposed by certain countries, commodities associated with environmental issues, political unrest in several nations and the recent outbreak of COVID-19. All these challenges have affected Malaysia as an open economy. In this matter, We are confident that Our Government will continue to minimise any negative impacts on the people and the nation.

9. The COVID-19 outbreak that has spread around the world including Malaysia has impacted the economy and health as well as the lives of the people. Never before has the country faced such a serious outbreak. In facing this grievous outbreak, the Government's main focus is to ensure that the well-being and safety of the people are always protected. This includes enforcing the Movement Control Order and bringing home Malaysians stranded abroad.

10. We understand that many industries and businesses have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Nevertheless, We urge employers not to lay-off their workers indiscriminately. This is the time for everyone to make small sacrifices to help them cope with such hardships and support the nation's economy. We also hope that the Government will

focus on helping companies and businesses that are badly hit, such as the tourism industry and small and medium enterprises.

11. We hope that the initiatives taken by the Economic Action Council including the introduction of RM260 billion Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package to safeguard the welfare of the people and to support the country's small and medium enterprises would have immediate effect. It is indeed a major and unparalleled package. Thus, it needs the full support of all parties. We are confident that with the cooperation and collaboration of all involved, we will be able to overcome this challenge together, Insya-Allah.

Honourable Members,

12. In spite of the Government's efforts, We are concerned about the lurking racial polarisation nowadays. In Our point of view, any form of provocation and ideologies as well as values that are contrary to the norms, social practices and laws, even by a few parties, must be contained before they become cancerous to the national stability.

13. All races need to be sincere in their actions to improve and foster good relationship. In an effort to strengthen social cohesion and national integration, We welcome the implementation of the National Unity Action Plan to ensure that the national unity agenda will be fully integrated with elements of trust and identity based on the principles of *Rukun Negara*.

14. Islam, the religion of the Federation as enshrined in the Federal Constitution will continue to be protected. In line with the Islamic teachings that are all encompassing and guided by the principles of the *Maqasid Shariah*, We call for the Government to establish an Islamic administration which is inclusive, progressive and promotes harmonious ethnic and religious relations, to guide humanity and civilisation towards universal well-being. At the same time, Our Government will continue to uphold the right of other religions to practice their faith prudently and peacefully.

15. In regard to the aspects of national security, We hope that the country's future defence strategy and policy framework should take into account the importance of defence diplomacy, a pragmatic foreign policy, international treaties and the geopolitical positions of countries in the Asia Pacific region. The intensification of military activities by the two world powers, the United States and the People's Republic of China, in the South China Sea should be given due attention. This requires Malaysia to be constantly cognizant of the country's maritime domains while continuing to develop strategies in support of the nation's geopolitical aspirations. At the same time, the level of security in the country should continue to be enhanced especially in dealing with crime, drug abuse, smuggling and human trafficking. In addition, the Government should also formulate a comprehensive approach in addressing the influx of illegal immigrants which could give rise to a variety of economic, social and security issues. The country's vast border needs to be fortified in the effort to curb the inward flow of illegal immigrants.

Honourable Members,

16. Our Government will continue to plan, introduce and implement various programmes and initiatives to boost economic activities aimed at increasing the income and well-being of the people. Moving forward, the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 will be a catalyst in charting a new direction for national development. This vision aims to enable citizens from all walks of life to enjoy a decent standard of living with a just, equitable and inclusive economy. In addition, the gap in economy and development among various income groups, regions, ethnics and supply chains will be reduced.

17. The Twelfth Malaysia Plan, which will be tabled in this august house, is the first phase of the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030. We believe that the policies and strategies formulated under this plan with the participation of various groups of society, will further spur the nation's economic and development growth for the benefit of the people.

18. Realising the importance of investment in boosting the economy, Our Government will continue to facilitate business operations to increase investment activities. This will include reviewing relevant laws, approval processes and existing incentives. We call for the approval processes especially for high impact projects to be improved, efficient and expedited to attract more quality investments.

19. In line with the Industrial Revolution 4.0, We welcome policies on creating an ecosystem that supports industries through funding and incentives, support-infrastructure development and regulatory frameworks. Newly emerging growth sources such as 5G technology, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things and big data analytics will be intensified. We urge industry players to step up efforts to complement the Government initiatives.

Honourable Members,

20. Our Government will continue to work towards creating employment opportunities for the people, including in the field of entrepreneurship, which is the core mover of the nation's economic development. We welcome strategies and initiatives to develop more small and medium enterprises towards transforming Malaysia into a leading entrepreneurial nation by 2030.

21. To ensure that the nation remain consistently ahead in various areas, progress in Industrial Revolution 4.0 can be capitalised to promote access to and equality in education besides emphasis on knowledge, skills and character development. The education system will be facing the new normal especially in the post COVID-19 era. Collaboration of higher learning institutions with various stakeholders should also be intensified to produce knowledgeable, highly skilled and competitive human capital.

22. We hope that investment in research, development and innovation will be intensified to develop the human capital needed to keep up with current developments specifically in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We also strongly support the strengthening of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, or TVET to equip the youth to face new challenges in the workplace.

23. Our Government will continue to strive in narrowing the development and economic gaps among states and regions. These efforts include enhancing people's mobility by improving networks, basic infrastructure, as well as transportation that also entails upgrading of the public transport systems while simultaneously supporting the logistics industry.

24. Steps have been taken to improve the well-being of the people and address the development gaps in Sabah and Sarawak, through the implementation of critical infrastructure projects in both states. We hope the people in both states will be able to enjoy better communication network as well as quality amenities. The interior of the Peninsula will also continue to be given attention especially the Orang Asli settlements.

Honourable Members,

25. Recent data shows that more than two-thirds of Malaysians live in urban areas. Accordingly, the well-being of the urban community will continue to be improved. In order to promote home ownership, Our Government has formulated a National Affordable Housing Policy and

established Rent-to-Own Scheme. It is expected that this initiative will enable more B40s and M40s groups as well as qualified youth to own homes.

26. As a caring Government, the cost of living of the people will continue to be managed as best as possible. Measures have been taken to prevent monopolistic practices, foster healthy competition and, increase the production of quality products at reasonable prices as well as strategic cooperation between the public and private sectors. Initiatives such as the Price Standardisation Programme, Buy Malaysia Products Campaign and targeted subsidies for example will continuously be enhanced to help tackle the cost of living issues.

27. Our Government will continue to safeguard the welfare and well-being of children, women, senior citizens, the disabled and the needy. In order to strengthen the protection and rights of children, efforts will be made to ensure that children are not exploited in any form and that their full potential can be realised. We also welcome the drafting of the Social Workers Profession Bill, which will contribute to developing a new dimension to the social landscape of the nation. On the other hand, the youth needs to be provided guidance to ensure that they are not engaged in negative schemes. Youth participation in decision-making should also be encouraged, as they are the future leaders of the country.

Honourable Members,

28. Our government will continue to develop a sustainable agriculture-based commodity industry supported by quality research and development as well as efforts to increase demand including at the global market. In order to improve agricultural output and safeguard national food security, emphasis should be placed on automation, usage of modern technology, quality seeds, fertilisation and irrigation systems, control of diseases and consolidation of agricultural areas.

29. Our Government is committed to improve access to equitable healthcare services to the people. Healthcare services will be strengthened by emphasising preventive and holistic care including to the rural communities, Orang Asli and the natives of Sabah and Sarawak.

Honourable Members,

30. Environmental degradation and its impact nationally and globally, can no longer be overlooked. Thus, We urge Malaysia to remain committed to championing environmental and climate change issues, including intensifying efforts to conserve rivers, forests, wildlife and reducing the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions as well as promoting the use of renewable energy. The strengthening of environmental legislation, enforcement activities and collaboration among all parties including regional countries need to be continuously pursued.

31. Although the Visit Malaysia Year 2020 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak, efforts to strengthen the country's tourism sector should be commenced. In the meantime, industry players should strive to enhance tourism products and packages as well as maintain the existing infrastructure to restore the country's tourism sector.

32. As the host of APEC Summit 2020, Malaysia has been given enormous responsibility to chart the way forward for APEC, especially in setting a new path for regional economic cooperation in the post COVID-19. We trust that Our Government will rise to the occasion and provide the requisite leadership in determining the new vision of APEC and also to succeed the Bogor Goals which ends this year.

Honourable Members,

33. In any event, any plans and programmes aimed at achieving a stable and prosperous developed country will not be successful if the country continues to be plagued by corruption. Thus, the implementation of development programmes based on integrity and good governance is essential to achieve sustainable economic growth for the betterment of the people and the nation. We urge Our Government to remain committed to its implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Plan. We call on all parties to support this aspiration so that the implementation of each development programme is not jeopardised by corruption, embezzlement and abuse of power. It should be instilled in the minds of society from an early age that corruption is an abhorrent and a form of evil act and should be battle unremittingly.

Honourable Members,

34. We greatly appreciate the loyalty and contributions of members of the Civil Service, the Malaysian Armed Forces, the Royal Malaysia Police and the Government agencies which have dedicated their efforts towards developing a peaceful, prosperous and respected Malaysia. We urge those who have been entrusted with and given the responsibility to serve the country and the people to continue to perform in a professional and neutral manner regardless of race, religion or position. At the same time, We call on the people to work together with the Government to continue develop the nation. We believe that only with solidarity between the people and the Government will we be able to build a stable, peaceful and prosperous Malaysia.

Honourable Members,

35. Before We conclude this address, We have a message for all Honourable Members. As leaders, Honourable Members have to be exemplary in instilling positive values in the people. Differences in opinions should not lead to hostility and slander. Instead, differences of opinion should be the platform for promoting new ideas to develop and unify the country. Honourable Members should always display maturity in politics. This includes voicing the needs and aspirations of the people, protecting their well-being, adhering to the principles of justice, promoting a clean political culture, and not impinging on issues of race or religion as well as on the sovereignty and position of the Malay

Rulers. Do not revert the country to a situation of political turmoil while the people are still faced with various problems and a difficult future due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, unity and harmony begin in this august house. We are confident that the people will continue to be united and collaborate in developing the nation if they are not baited with the flames of hostility and disunity. Therefore, conduct your debates in a responsible manner and always display a positive political maturity which the people can emulate. To Our beloved people, We urge that you continue to take care of your personal and family's health as well as the environment around you. Avoid crowds, and keep practising social distancing. It is hoped that with these measures, Malaysia will be successful in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic.

36. In ending this address, We and the Raja Permaisuri Agong pray that Malaysia and her people will continue to be blessed and bestowed by Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala with His Benevolence and Guidance, and continue to enjoy peace and unity under His Protection. Amin. Ramadan Mubarak and Eid Mubarak, sincere greetings from Us, the Raja Permaisuri Agong and Our family.

Sekian, Wabillahi Taufik Walhidayah,
Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh.