

Tun Abdul Razak

A Phenomenon in Malaysian Politics

A Political Biography

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*to my daughters Tidi Maharani and Astrid Sinarti (lin)
instilling in them that honesty, sincerity and integrity
would make great leaders out of every individual*



Preface

Malaysia is currently striving along its path of success by performing and demonstrating a good and consistent record of economic development. It is ambitiously set to achieve a status of developed nation within the first quarter of the new century. Despite some injury partly self-inflicted, it has become a nation which stands tall in international forums to show its uncompromising principles in the highly western biased international political games. If there is one man to be named who initiated and laid the foundation for this path of success, that man is Tun Abdul Razak.

Known as "Father of Development", "Father of Peace" and "Architect of Malaysia's Development" there is need to assess and to revive the contribution of Tun Abdul Razak to the history of Malaysia's development by local and international analysts in search of better understanding of Malaysia's politics and development. There has been only one book about Tun Abdul Razak's life and times that was distributed internationally, written by William Shaw more than twenty years ago.

Twenty years after his demise, the author feels opportuned to revive Tun Abdul Razak's contribution by proposing this book as an honour and tribute to him. The book does not attempt to recount in detail Tun Abdul Razak's personal or private life, but essentially it is a political biography where analysis of the political development of Malaya/Malaysia will be related within the context of his time and his contribution.

By understanding Malaysian politics and development within Tun Abdul Razak's time, the current and future generation may appreciate how achievement needs a strong foundation and commitment and sincerity such as those demonstrated by the leadership of Tun Abdul Razak. This book is an attempt to highlight Tun Abdul Razak's achievements in laying a concrete foundation to the economic and political development of Malaysia especially at the stage when the Malaysian Government in 1969, had inadequate mechanism to withstand inherited, long-fermenting internal pressures. When the Parliament and the State Legislature were suspended, and the country placed under a National Operations Council (NOC) through the newly proclaimed Emergency regulations, there was a necessity for the nation to find a strong and non-compromising man to head this Council and make it

work. That man was Tun Abdul Razak, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

His brilliance in reshaping the country's foreign policy from that of pro-western to non-alignment demonstrated the strong vision and leadership of Tun Abdul Razak when he was mandated the full power as Prime Minister. The fruits of this vision are today felt even more when Malaysia is recognised as a leader among the developing countries and not merely as a puppet of big powers.

Tun Abdul Razak's vision that was more felt by his people is without doubt the overhauling of the agricultural sector of the country. Tun Abdul Razak was convinced that it was necessary for the country to have a firm foundation and a modern and successful agricultural sector as a pre-requisite to further economic development. Under future leadership Malaysia could take off further to become an industrial and manufacturing nation, but its agricultural sector needs to be intact to support the nation's pursuit of a more ambitious development programme.

The scope of discussion of this book covers the period of Malaya's independence and the formation of Malaysia, the very significant part that Tun Abdul Razak contributed to his country's development and political affairs over a period of twenty-five years from 1951 to 1976 and the impact that he left to his nation from his actions and policies enjoyed now by all Malaysians.

Chapter 1 of this book revives Tun Abdul Razak's childhood life from the village of his origin to his schooling days. This early life of Tun Abdul Razak was well described in the book "Tun Abdul Razak: His Life and Times", written by William Shaw. The author has therefore extensively relied on William Shaw's narration, convinced that an understanding of Tun Abdul Razak's early days that started forming his character and qualities was necessary to appreciate fully the manner in which Tun Abdul Razak uplifted the economy of the country that he later led.

Chapter 2 focuses on Tun Abdul Razak's early involvement in the nation's struggle against the Japanese during the Second World War and struggle for the achievement of independence alongside Tunku Abdul Rahman and other colleagues. William Shaw's narration was again referred to, supplemented by memoirs of former colleagues and other people closely associated with Tun Abdul Razak then.

Chapters 3 to 8 describe in depth the different phases of leadership of Tun Abdul Razak. These Chapters in essence show the real political strength of Tun Abdul Razak, narrating his responsibility, his uncom-