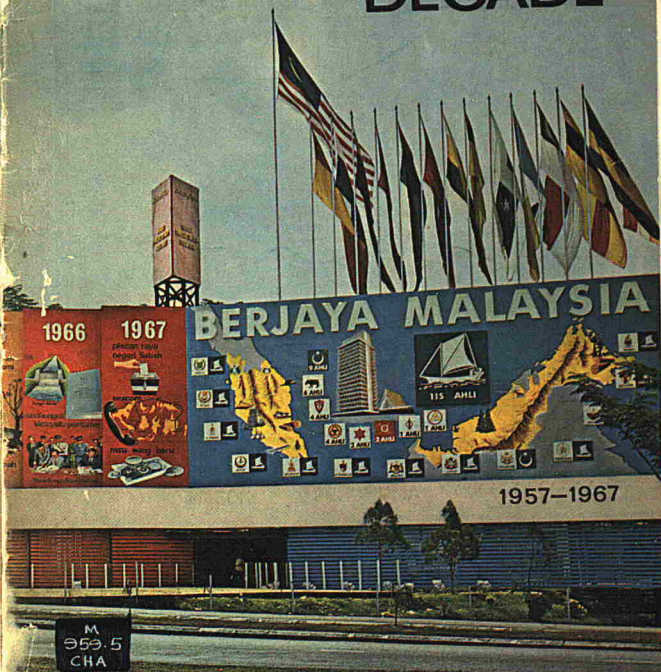


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# THE CHALLENGING DECADE



## BERJAYA MALAYSIA

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*A review of Malaysia's ten years of independence  
based on a Radio Malaysia broadcast highlighting the  
major political and constitutional developments from  
1957 to 1967.*

**COVER:** *Giant panels at the 10th Merdeka Anniversary celebrations  
erected outside the Exhibition building in Kuala Lumpur.*

## THE CHALLENGING DECADE

ON 31st August, 1957, the Federation of Malaya became a free and independent sovereign nation, thus marking the beginning of a new existence for Malaya and her people.

The night of the eve of Merdeka is worth recalling for it was a night of happiness and rejoicing not only for Malaysians but for her friends all over the world. The end of British rule was near—an era which lasted for more than 170 years.



*Sir Donald McGillivray*

In the last few minutes before the birth of the new and momentous day, the last High Commissioner under British administration, Sir Donald McGillivray, sent the following farewell message:

"I seem to see myself standing at the end of a long picture gallery, stretching back through decades of progress to the time of Francis Light in Penang and Stamford Raffles in Malacca. I see the faces of many men and women who came here to serve and who enjoyed every minute of their service, however long the hours or hard the road. For they have found here a very wonderful country and it is the people who make the country. Men and women who have looked out from the past, wondering with anxiety in their faces what sort of ending there would be this era of British rule and who now will be rejoicing with us that it should come in this happy way, with the old friendships between Britain and Malaya stronger than ever before."



*Mid-night Flag Raising Ceremony on 30th August, 1957, to mark the birth of the new nation.*

At exactly twelve midnight, the Chief Minister and Prime Minister designate, Tunku Abdul Rahman, led a mammoth crowd at the Selangor Club padang in front of the Secretariat to witness and rejoice the birth of a new nation. Addressing the crowd, the Tunku said:

"This is the greatest moment in the life of the Malayan people, for a new nation is born. A nation that will stand forthwith free and independent.

To all Malaysians this is a fateful moment. A moment we have long prayed for. A moment of joy and gladness. Humble yourself before God, whether it be in mosques, churches and temples or in our homes. Give thanks to Him for this blessing He has showered upon us. A new star rises in the Eastern sky—a star of freedom for yet another Asian people. A new hope comes into being. A dream long cherished now materializes. It is freedom—freedom for the Malayan people. And once this torch of free-

dom is lit, let us hold it up high so that all around us will glow with radiant happiness.

Let freedom be secured for all the law-abiding people. There shall be freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom from want, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of movement. Let us be free from the menace of communist terrorism—the terrorism which has terrorised this country for the last nine years, so that the people of this country can be free to move wheresoever they choose—unharassed, unafraid and undisturbed.

With freedom there is much to do for us all. Freedom must bring with it opportunities for all—to the needy, new hope; to the sick and afflicted, relief; to those distressed and in want, help.

We shall build our social, economic and educational structures so that the new nation will rear its head sturdy and proud and the people happy and contented."

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On the morning of 31st August, 1957, at huge ceremony held at the Merdeka Stadium, the Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman received the instruments of power from the Queen of England's representative, the Duke of Gloucester and immediately after, he read the Proclamation of Independence:

**"Now in the Name of God The Compassionate, The Merciful, I, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Abdul Hamid Halimshah, Prime Minister of the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, with the concurrence and approval of Their Highnesses The Rulers of the Malay States, do hereby proclaim and declare on behalf of the people of the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu that as from the 31st day of August 1957 the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu comprising the States of Johore, Pahang, Negri Sembilan, Selangor, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu, Perak, Malacca and Penang is, and with God's blessing, shall be forever a sovereign, democratic and independent State founded upon the principle of liberty and justice and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and the maintenance of a just peace among all nations."**