

NO02:
BERNAMA FEATURE FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION.

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8-7-1981
FROM RUNNING A COFFEE STALL TO HOLDING THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT.

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(P)
MAHATHIR 1

SINCE HIS CHILDHOOD / DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS DISPLAYED DISTINCT CHARACTER, UPHOLDING THE PHILOSOPHY THAT WHATEVER OTHERS CAN DO, HE CAN DO TOO.

FROM A VERY YOUNG AGE, DR. MAHATHIR HAS ALSO PROVED TO BE CONSCIENTIOUS AND INTELLIGENT.

HIS FATHER, THE LATE MOHAMAD BIN ISKANDAR, LEFT PENANG TO SETTLE IN KEDAH WHERE DR. MAHATHIR WAS BORN, THE YOUNGEST OF NINE CHILDREN.

HE STUDIED IN THE MALAY SCHOOL FOR BOYS AT SEBERANG PERAK FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE JOINING THE GOVERNMENT ENGLISH SCHOOL IN ALOR STAR UNTIL HE COMPLETED HIS SENIOR CAMBRIDGE.

HIS EDUCATION WAS INTERRUPTED FOR FOUR YEARS WHEN MALAYA WAS OCCUPIED BY THE JAPANESE ARMY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

RATHER THAN SPEND HIS FREE TIME IDLING, DR. MAHATHIR SOUGHT HIS FATHER'S PERMISSION TO START A BUSINESS. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0800/ZCM

NO03:

MAHATHIR 2 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

HIS FIRST BUSINESS VENTURE WAS A COFFEE AND OAKES STALL SHARED WITH TWO CLOSE FRIENDS, ENCIK JOHARI MOHAMAD TAIB (PAK JO) AND ENCIK NOOR MADAR (NANA).

THE STALL WAS LOCATED BESIDE THE RIVER AT PEKAN RABU, THE SITE IS NOW THE KOTA SETAR LAND OFFICE CAR PARK.

ACCORDING TO PAK JO, WHO NOW RUNS HIS OWN STALL AT PEKAN RABU, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS A CONSCIENTIOUS SCHOLAR.

+CHE DET (MAHATHIR) WAS N NEVER WITHOUT A BOOK. WHENEVER THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE DONE, HE WOULD BE READING, + ASSERTS PAK JO.

NOW 63 YEARS OLD, PAK JO DESCRIBES DR. MAHATHIR AS A FIRM, HONEST AND FORTHRIGHT MAN.

+CHE DET WOULD BRING HIS BOOKS TO THE STALL AND, WHENEVER HE WAS FREE, HE WOULD BE READING A BOOK RATHER THAN SIT AROUND IDLY, + SAYS PAK JO AS HE REMINISCES.

PAK JO ALSO RECALLS THAT ENCIK MOHAMAD KHIR JOHARI AND ENCIK ZULKIFLI HAJI HASHIM USED TO PATRONISE THE STALL RUN BY DR. MAHATHIR. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0803/ZCM

NO04:

MAHATHIR 3 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

SUBSEQUENTLY, DR. MAHATHIR AND HIS TWO BUSINESS ASSOCIATES SET UP A STALL TO SELL FRUITS AND HANDICRAFTS AT PEKAN RABU. DR. MAHATHIR WAS APPOINTED MANAGER OF THE BUSINESS BECAUSE OF HIS COMPETENCE.

+AS BEFORE, CHE DET WAS ALWAYS READING WHENVER THERE WAS NO CUSTOMER TO BE ATTENDED TO, + EXPLAINS PAK JO.

FROM HIS BUSINESS EXPERIENCE WITH DR. MAHATHIR, PAK JO OBSERVES THAT DR. MAHATHIR HAS THE QUALITIES OF A COMPETENT AND SHREWD BUSINESSMAN.

DR. MAHATHIR GAVE SERIOUS ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS FACED BY MALAY ENTREPRENEURS AND OFTEN OFFERED HIS VIEWS HOW TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0806/ZCM

NO05:

MAHATHIR 4 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

DR. MAHATHIR'S BUSINESS VENTURES CAME TO AN END WHEN THE SECOND WORLD WAR TERMINATED AND MALAYA WAS RETURNED TO BRITISH RULE.

DR. MAHATHIR RESUMED HIS STUDIES IN THE GOVERNMENT ENGLISH SCHOOL IN 1945 UNTIL HE OBTAINED HIS SENIOR CAMBRIDGE CERTIFICATE.

IN 1948, DR. MAHATHIR FURTHERED HIS EDUCATION IN MEDICINE IN RAFFLES COLLEGE, SINGAPORE.

DR. MAHATHIR JOINED THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE IN 1954 AND SERVED AT THE ALOR STAR HOSPITAL. IN 1956, DR. MAHATHIR SERVED AS MEDICAL OFFICER AT LANGKAWI FOR SIX MONTHS BEFORE RESUMING HIS SERVICE AT THE ALOR STAR HOSPITAL. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0809/ZCM

IN 1957, DR. MAHATHIR RESIGNED FROM GOVERNMENT SERVICE TO OPEN HIS OWN CLINIC, MAHA KLINIK, ON JALAN TUNKU IBRAHIM.

ACCORDING TO ENCIK ABDULLAH BIN PA' CHIK OR PAK LAH, AGED 64 YEARS, WHO HAS BEEN WITH THE MAHA KLINIK SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT, DR. MAHATHIR IS ALSO A GENEROUS MAN.

DR. MAHATHIR DID NOT MAKE HIS PATIENTS PAY FOR THEIR TREATMENT IF THEY WERE TOO POOR.

PAK LAH ALSO SAYS THAT IF THE PATIENT DID NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT MONEY TO PAY, DR. MAHATHIR WOULD JUST ACCEPT A TOKEN PAYMENT OF 10 SEN, 50 SEN OR ONE RINGGIT.

ACCORDING TO PAK LAH, THERE WERE ONLY FIVE MEDICAL CLINICS IN ALOR STAR IN 1957 AND MAHA KLINIK WAS THE FIRST TO BE SET UP BY A MALAY DOCTOR. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0812/ZCM

N007:

MAHATHIR 6 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

MAHA KLINIK BECAME THE MEETING PLACE OF THE PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY MALAYS FROM ALOR STAR AND THE NEARBY TOWNS.

THE CLINIC WAS SHIFTED TO PEKAN MELAYU IN 1959 TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMANDS MADE ON IT.

PAK LAH SAYS SINCE DR. MAHATHIR OPENED HIS CLINIC, HE HAS NEVER HANDLED THE CASH TAKINGS WHICH WERE FIRST IN THE HANDS OF HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, THE LATE PAK HASSAN, AND SUBSEQUENTLY PAK LAH HIMSELF.

THIS IS ONE OF DR. MAHATHIR'S MOST ADMIRABLE QUALITIES. IF HE HAS FAITH IN A PERSON, HE WILL TRUST HIM WITH ANYTHING, EVEN MONEY, + EXPLAINS PAK LAH.

AS AN EMPLOYER, DR. MAHATHIR DOES NOT LIKE TO SEE HIS STAFF WASTE THEIR TIME. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0815/ZCM

NO08:

MAHATHIR 7 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

WHEN DR. MAHATHIR WAS CARRYING OUT HIS BUSINESS IN PEKAN RABU, HE WON THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE WHO ELECTED HIM INTO THE TOWN'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

DR. MAHATHIR STILL HAS TIES WITH PEKAN RABU WHERE HE IS PATRON OF THE PEKAN RABU COOPERATIVE SOCIETY.

BUSINESSMEN IN PEKAN RABU ARE GRATEFUL TO DR. MAHATHIR FOR ENABLING THEM TO ENJOY BIGGER AND MODERN PREMISES IN PLACE OF THE OLD BUILDING WHICH WAS BURNT DOWN.

+PAK JO BELIEVES THAT CHE DET WILL BE A VERY ABLE PRIME MINISTER WHO WILL BRING PROGRESS TO THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY. HE IS HUMBLE, ALWAYS STRESSING ON MATTERS OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY BEFORE SELF. + SAYS ANOTHER OF DR. MAHATHIR'S FORMER BUSINESS ASSOCIATES, PROUDLY. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0818/ZCM

NO09:

MAHATHIR 8 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

ALTHOUGH DR. MAHATHIR HOLDS HIGH OFFICE NOW, HE STILL DEVOTES ATTENTION TO THE PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF PEKAN RABU.

+CHE DET IS STILL THE CHE DET OF OLD. HE DOES NOT FORGET HIS OLD FRIENDS. + SAYS PAK JO.

+CHE DET OFTEN STOPS BY PEKAN RABU WHEN HE IS IN KEDAH. HE REMEMBERS THE PEOPLE OF PEKAN RABU. HE DOES NOT FORGET OAK JO, WHO ONCE SOLD GORENG PISANG, FRUITS AND COFFEE WITH HIM. + REITERATES PAK JO.

INDEED, DR. MAHATHIR HAS ALWAYS REMINDED MALAY BUSINESSMEN TO START FROM THE BOTTOM, TO GAIN EXPERIENCE AND KNOW-HOW. — BERNAMA FEATURE MORE 0822/ZCM

NO10:

MAHATHIR 9 (BERNAMA FEATURE)

PAK LAH ALSO REMEMBERS THE FAMILY OF DR. MAHATHIR BECAUSE HE WAS VERY CLOSE TO MOHAMAD ISKANDAR.

ACCORDING TO PAK LAH, DR. MAHATHIR'S FATHER CAME FROM PENANG AND BECAME A TEACHER IN THE GOVERNMENT ENGLISH SCHOOL IN 1908.

HE ADDS THAT AT THE TIME, THE NAME OF MOHAMAD ISKANDAR WAS ALMOST SYNONYMOUS WITH DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF KEDAH.

BESIDES BEING A TEACHER IN KEDAH, DR. MAHATHIR'S FATHER ALSO TAUGHT IN PERAK, SELANGOR, JOHORE AND PAHANG.

THE LATE MOHAMAD ISKANDAR ALSO SERVED IN THE AUDIT DEPARTMENT UNTIL HE RETIRED IN 1931. HE PASSED AWAY IN 1961 WHEN HE WAS 84 YEARS OLD.

PAK LAH SAYS THAT WITH A BACKGROUND LIKE HIS, DR. MAHATHIR WILL BE ABLE TO PERFORM HIS DUTIES AS PRIME MINISTER WITH OUTSTANDING SUCCESS. — BERNAMA FEATURE 0824/ZCM

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