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SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AT THE OPENING OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING OF THE EMPLOYEES'
PROVIDENT FUND STAFF UNION, KUALA
LUMPUR ON 28TH SEPTEMBER, 1963

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice-President, Mr. Stanley, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Employees' Provident Fund Staff Union, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to thank you very much indeed both for your invitation to open the Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Employees' Provident Fund Staff Union and for the warm welcome you have given me today.

May I say at once that I am very glad to have the opportunity to do so. The Employees' Provident Fund comes within the purview of the Minister of Finance, for whom I am acting at present while he is abroad in the United Kingdom and the United States. As Deputy Prime Minister and being at the centre of the nation's economic affairs, I am naturally very familiar with the operations of the EPF and the important role it takes in national finance and investment.

Oddly enough, this happens to be the very first time I have had a chance to visit the splendid and well equipped premises of the Fund, and I am pleased that your invitation gives me a personal reason for being here.

As members of the staff of the Employees' Provident Fund, you are part and parcel of one of the most important organisations in the whole nation. Not only is the EPF a special kind of treasury responsible for vast sums of money accumulated, and still growing, behalf of over two million contributors, but it is also one of the basic sources for financing our vast programme of national development.

Your responsibility, therefore, as officers and servants of the Fund is very great indeed. The management of the Fund's affairs and its steady growth are a great source of satisfaction to the Government, and reflect great credit on the efficiency and devotion of all concerned. There is no doubt at all that much merit for this happy state of affairs is due to the harmonious relations and understanding existing between the Union and the management. I have every confidence that this climate of concord and goodwill will happily continue not only for your own benefit but in the national interests.

It is extremely important that such good relations should exist, as the EPF, like many other institutions and organisations in Malaya, must now begin to take into account the wider horizons of Malaysia. The operations of the Fund have been confined to the eleven States of Malaya in the past and now consideration will need to be given to extending the authority and responsibility of the EPF throughout Malaysia.

Bearing in mind the success of the Fund to-date, I am confident that when this new development occurs the Fund and all its staff will tackle the increased responsibilities involved with the same good record and high reputation they have already earned.

So far I have referred to the Fund and the staff in national terms, but as employees of the EPF, combined together in a staff Union of your own, you naturally have questions of domestic interest which are important and intimate for you.

I am very glad to hear that a scheme has been successfully negotiated recently to provide loans for housing for the staff of the EPF. This is a very welcome development, as it fits in with Government's overall policy of encouraging home-ownership for all citizens.

To give you some idea of the Government's plans for home-ownership, our Second Five-Year Plan provides a sum of \$45,000,000 for the purpose. Of this amount it is expected that \$20,000,000 will have been spent by the end of this year in providing low cost houses for the lower income groups. Since the Second Five-Year Plan began in 1961, 3,600 low cost houses including flats have been built. Another 3,000 are now under construction and are scheduled for

completion this year or early next year. In addition, the Municipality of Kuala Lumpur has bought a considerable area of land to help fulfil for its municipal staff Government's policy of home-ownership. The Central Government is actively considering purchase of an extensive area of land in the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur for the same purpose, homes for the Government servants.

I am informed that you have encountered some difficulty in finding suitable sites for homes, and naturally you want to be living as close to your work as possible. I can assure you that the Government is giving consideration to this problem and everything possible will be done to find a satisfactory solution.

I also understand that your Union has put forward certain claims for revision of pay in view of the increasing responsibilities of these EPF. Knowing the spirit of co-operation and goodwill which has animated the close and cordial relations between management and staff in the past, I have no doubt at all that these negotiations will be conducted and settled in both an amicable satisfactory way.

On behalf of the Government I would like to declare my warm appreciation of the support and loyalty expressed by the Union and its members this morning at this time when national unity in the face of external pressure is so vitally necessary.

Whatever our racial origin may be, we are all Malaysians together, proud of our country for its past achievements and confident of greater progress and prosperity in future if we can live in peace in our own way, so it is our honest duty to rally to the support of Malaysia in a time of stress and strain. Our strength lies in unity and your support is another golden link in the chain of unity.

May I conclude by offering my very best wishes to the members of your Union for happy and successful future both in internal relations and in maintaining the remarkable prestige of the Employees' Provident Fund, to which each and everyone of you has contributed in building a great institution of which the whole nation is proud.

I take much pleasure now in declaring open the Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Employees' Provident Fund Staff Union.



Tun Abdul Razak sedang memberi penerangan tentang Pembangunan Luar Bandar kepada Ahli-ahli Konggres Amerika Syarikat di Bilik Gerakan Negara, Kuala Lumpur pada 10hb Oktober, 1963.