

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE
OPENING OF THE R.M.A.F. SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL
TRAINING AT KINRARA ON 23 RD MAY, 1964

This year the Royal Malaysian Air Force celebrates its sixth birthday; in six years it has developed from a couple of aircraft to an operational force consisting of seven different aircraft types, some of which are already deployed and in action in the Borneo States - others will soon equip a new airfield at Alor Star as part of our expansion programme: these developments are possible only with an assured efficiency of technical support.

Maintenance of aircraft in an air force is an essential and complicated function of its operation; thus training of technical maintenance specialists to carry out that task within the close limits of efficiency and safety is of vital importance. This school, the only one of its kind in Malaysia, has been designed and manned to meet the exacting needs of a modern air force. It exists to train mechanics and technicians in five different aeronautical specialisations ranging from aircraft and sero engines to airborne electrics, instruments, and radio; supply specialists are also trained here and the school runs technical management "refresher" courses for officers and N.C.O.s.

From a humble beginning in 1961, when it was formed to train three different types of air mechanics the school has developed to its present state of self sufficiency with over hundred men under training; during the past three years some 330 technical airmen have been trained by it for service in the R.M.A.F. During 1965, we expect to train over four hundred more and to continue refresher courses for young technical officers and N.C.O.s; this will raise the trainer population to two hundred and fifty. In the past the bulk of R.M.A.F. technical training was done overseas, mainly at R.A.F. schools in British or Singapore, but over the past eighteen months we have planned this new school in which we can now train almost all of our men to the specific technical needs of the R.M.A.F.: in this venture we have been aided by the R.A.F. in supply of much training equipment and material which otherwise would have cost some \$100,000: we have also bought much new equipment elsewhere and the total value of the instructional aids now approaches half a million dollars.

The technical courses in this school - of which there are twelve running concurrently — maintain standards equal to those of long esta-

blished air forces and embrace international aeronautical standards of workmanship and skill of hand: here in Malaysia we have an effective source of technical training which can be regarded as a National asset for the future in the technical advancement of the Nation.

The success of this school owes much to the enterprise and devotion of its staff who interview, select, and train every man, entered for training and who have devoted much of their own time to the design and construction of training equipment and technical training syllabuses for students. Our standards are high for technical service in the R.M.A.F. and only the best and most suitable men are accepted in the Service.

The two courses passing out today have done well; there were no failures and four have been awarded certificates of merit for outstanding achievement in their examination. These airmen are representative of the new Malaysian technicians in our developing air force; they carry heavy responsibilities for the safety and efficiency of the aircraft they will maintain but their prospects in a varied and stimulating career are very bright — I wish them all good luck in the future.