

TR 3:1:72

UCAPAN PERDANA MENTERI DI PEMBUKAAN
RASMI MAKTAB TURUS ANGKATAN TENTERA
MALAYSIA DI KEMENTERIAN PERTAHANAN,
KUALA LUMPUR PADA 8HB JANUARI, 1972

Yang Berbahagia General Tan Sri Ibrahim, Y.B. Menteri-Menteri,
Tuan-tuan Yang Terutama, Saudara-saudara sekalian.

Saya sungguh berbangga kerana dapat bersama-sama di sini pada hari yang bersejarah untuk seluruh angkatan tentera kita serta merasmikan pembukaan Maktab Turus Angkatan Tentera Malaysia ini.

Selama hampir-hampir lima belas tahun kita menjadi bangsa yang merdeka dan berdaulat, Kerajaan telah berusaha memperbesar serta memodenkan angkatan tentera kita kerana kita sedar di bahu merekalah terletaknya tanggungjawab mempertahankan kemerdekaan dan kedaulatan negara. Dalam hubungan ini, saya merasa betapa mustahaknya kita mempunyai sebuah Maktab Turus Angkatan Tentera seperti negara-negara yang lain. Maktab ini boleh disifatkan sebagai tingkat lanjutan dari Maktab Tentera Diraja yang ada sekarang ini di mana sejak beberapa tahun kita telah mengeluarkan calon-calon pegawai tentera yang terlatih untuk setiap cabang angkatan tentera—darat, laut dan udara.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a personal pleasure for me to be present on this auspicious occasion of the official opening of the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College this morning. It's about five years ago when I suggested the idea of establishing our own Staff Officers College to meet the increasing needs of our Armed Forces for adequately trained officers at the middle ranks level. This need has become more urgent in the light of recent political developments in Asia particularly the South East Asian region. The time has come, therefore, that we as a nation, should be self-reliant in our defence and towards this end we have expanded the various branches of our armed forces and improved their capability to meet any circumstances.

I am very happy that the idea has now materialised and I am indeed grateful to everyone who has contributed his part towards the establishment of this College.

The establishment of the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College is a logical course of development for us as a Nation, and in particular, for our Armed Forces. As we are all aware, the Government Staff Training Centre at Petaling Jaya was established in 1963 for the training of the various echelons of our Civil Service; the Royal Malaysian Police College at Kuala Kubu Baharu was established ten years earlier in 1953. It is therefore only logical that the Armed Forces, as a vital arm of the Government, should have a College of their own to provide the much needed training for their staff officers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Until today, we have been obliged to depend on our friends, from within and outside the Commonwealth, for the training of our officers at various levels. On behalf of the Government, I take this opportunity to thank them all, namely the United Kingdom, Australia, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, the United States and Canada.

However, it is not our intention to cease sending our officers overseas with the opening of our Staff College here. I sincerely hope that our friends would continue to provide these facilities at their Staff Colleges because I strongly believe that personal contacts at these Colleges would be beneficial in promoting good relations between our Armed Forces and the Armed Forces of the respective countries as well as strengthening the bond of friendship between our respective countries.

Besides, our Malaysian Officers could gain immense knowledge from the environment and experience obtained in the Staff Colleges overseas which otherwise could not possibly be obtained here in Malaysia.

The establishment of this Staff College would give our officers the opportunity to further their training in our own environment. I am especially happy to note that the syllabi at the College are planned and designed to meet our requirements and conforming

to our Malaysian environment, with emphasis on local geography and the social economic and political structures obtaining in this country.

There is no doubt that knowledge on non-military aspects of our country and Government is no less important to our military officers than expertise on military tactics and strategy. Such knowledge would certainly be beneficial to our officers so that they could better understand the work and problems of the other Government agencies with whom they have to work together in our overall efforts towards achieving the national objectives of national unity and economic well-being.

On the other hand, it is also essential that officers in the administrative and professional categories be acquainted with the working of the Military if the whole Government machinery is to function smoothly and effectively. This means that there should be a channel to facilitate exchanges of knowledge and experience between Civil Officers and the Military and one way of doing this is for the various training institutions to work closely together and plan a programme whereby Civil Officers could be given opportunity to attend courses run by a military institution and vice versa. I believe this Staff College will take the lead in fulfilling this worthy task. In this way, it is hoped that better and greater understanding and proper co-ordination could be achieved between Government Departments in implementing their tasks particularly relating to our national objectives.

I strongly feel that close rapport between the two arms of government—civil and military—is all the more desirable at the present phase of our national development. This has proved vital in times of Emergency, borne out of our experience during the NOC Administration.

It is for this reason that I have retained the arrangement and structure of the NSC and the SSC which worked out magnificently during the floods disaster early last year and quite recently. I wish to thank all those concerned for the meritorious service they have rendered to our country.

I am happy to note that all the Staff Members of this College are Malaysian officers who have had their training in well-known Staff Colleges of our friendly countries. In other words, we have had the

novel situation where knowledge and experience gathered by each one of them from such diverse places as Quetta and Fort Leavenworth; Cranwell and Bandung; Wellington and Queen's Cliff are applied to suit our Malaysian environment.

I understand that recently they have been on a study tour to Australia, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Vietnam, Singapore and the United States to learn some aspects relating to the running of Staff Colleges in those countries. I wish to thank the Governments concerned for making this study tour possible.

The present site of the Staff College is a temporary one. This temporary arrangement has been necessary in view of the urgency of establishing the College. I am, however, happy to announce that blueprints for the construction of a modern complex at a permanent site are on the drawing board. The Staff College will undoubtedly enhance the prestige of our capital city.

Being a newly established institution, this College will be faced with the challenge of setting and maintaining a high standard of training as well as establishing a reputation and excellent traditions of its own. I am confident that under the leadership of the first Commandant, Brigadier General Arul, the Staff and students of the College are not only capable of meeting the challenge, but will strive hard to raise the prestige of the College comparable to those well-established ones elsewhere. This is the challenge of the New Year 1972, and I, on my part, will keep a close watch on your progress.

Saudara-saudara sekalian,

Sekianlah saja pesanan saya sambil berharap semoga Maktab Turus Angkatan Tentera ini mencapai kejayaan-kejayaan gemilang di masa hadapan. Sekarang saya dengan sukacita mengisytiharkan Maktab ini dibuka dengan rasminya.