

**SPEECH BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND
MINISTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AT
THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE,
AT THE CABINET ROOM, JALAN MAXWELL,
KUALA LUMPUR ON 12TH MAY, 1960**

Gentlemen, it certainly gives me a very great pleasure indeed to meet you here this morning. As has been said, this is the first Conference of State Development Officers we had since the establishment of the new Ministry of Rural Development and you have now been told the purpose of this Conference this morning. I would like this Conference to be very informal and it is not only for us here from this side of the table to tell you the various things but I hope it would be for you also to familiarise yourself with the role that you would have to play in this very important work.

As you know, I have said on a number of occasions, Government has decided to place this work of rural development as the highest priority in all Government activities and as you know we have now set up the organisation which we thought would be suitable for implementing this policy of the Government and in that organisation you gentlemen have been appointed as State Development officer, Deputy Chairman as well as Secretary of the State Rural Development Committee. Now, as Deputy Chairman and Secretary you have indeed a very important part to play in what you now call "Campaign for Rural Development". You may wonder why are designate you Deputy Chairman of the State Rural Development Committee, because we feel that the Mentri Besar in the State who is the Chairman of the State Rural Development Committee maybe busy with other work with the first stage and the bulk of the work will have to fall on your shoulders and it is my hope that in the absence of the Mentri Besar you would carry on the work of the Committee, to preside over the meeting of the Committee and carry out whatever work necessary. Now as Deputy Chairman as well as State Development Officer you have a number of functions to perform. First to my mind, you will have to co-ordinate the work of the various depart-

merits in the State, all the departments concerned with rural development. Now you will also have to supervise the work of the District Development Board or Committee and thirdly, most important of all, you will be the link between the Federal Government and the State Government. Therefore you have these three very important roles to play in this campaign for rural development. But the most important task that I would like you to carry out immediately is to try and gear the Government departments and Government officers to this important work of rural development. You will have to orientate the outlook of all Government officers to this new policy of Government.

In the past we noticed although progress has been made to some extent but there has been an attitude of some departments that progress can only be effected within the limits of Government capacity. That attitude must be changed if we want to proceed with this rural development will success. Progress now will be determined solely by what the people need and we, you and I, all of us have to serve the need of the people. That is why I said in this rural development work we must carry out with all the energy, with all the resources at our command. We must succeed and I would not like to see any difficulty in our way in future. If we decide on a project we must carry it out by all means at our command and that is the attitude that I would like to see every Government servant, every Head of Department have. That to my mind is the only way in which we can progress in this world. If we start planning within the limits of our resources and the limits of our capacity we will never get anywhere and that is why I said the pace of our development can only be determined with one factor and that is by the need of the people itself.

Now having said that I would like to explain some length how you are to play your role at various functions that I have mentioned. I would like you to see that the various Government Departments in the State do fit in into this whole structure of rural development. I like you to see if their policies do fit in into our policy for rural development. We have as you know from the very beginning and indeed in our Directive No. 1 emphasised that the Government machinery must be geared to this work and I would like you to examine straightaway the various policies of the Departments in the State and see there is no overlapping and the policies of the department do fit in this whole structure. And I

would like you also to see that every Government officer, each Head of Department know exactly what his responsibilities are and I think it is only by doing this can we get the Government machinery at State level working at proper speed and in a proper way. Of course you may find that you may not be able to do this; you may not be able to find out the overlapping in policies and in the work of departments until we have seen the full effect of this programme at the district level. Whatever it is, I hope you do keep constant watch and should there be any overlapping anywhere, it is important that it should be thrashed out straightaway at the State Committee and if necessary the matter should be brought up here to the Federal national level where we can thrash out at the various Ministries themselves.

Now, as I said the second function is to supervise the work of the District Development Committee. In my tour round the country I have endeavoured to explain to all D.Os.¹ that they have a very important part to play. I have told the D.Os. that each D.O. is the leader of the district. The D.O. must take the initiative to assume leadership whether he likes it or not. The D.O. is the head of the team of the district. He is the captain of the team and it is very important that at district level we should have a proper team work among the district officers and also the elected councillors and the D.O. must take the lead. He must be the leader and the captain of the team and it is your duty to see that the D.O. assumes that role properly. And you will have to visit the district constantly and do supervise the D.O. in his work. It will take sometime for them to gear themselves up to this task but we have got to bring them up. The success of our plan will depend on how these officers on the ground do the bulk of their task.

The third function as I said, you form the link with the Federal Government. You are there as a representative, as an officer not only of R.I.D.A.² but you are now an officer of the Ministry of Rural Development, you are a representative of the Federal Government as a whole as far as rural development is concerned. Therefore I do hope with the agreement of the Chairman of

1 District Officers

2 Rural and Industrial Development Authority

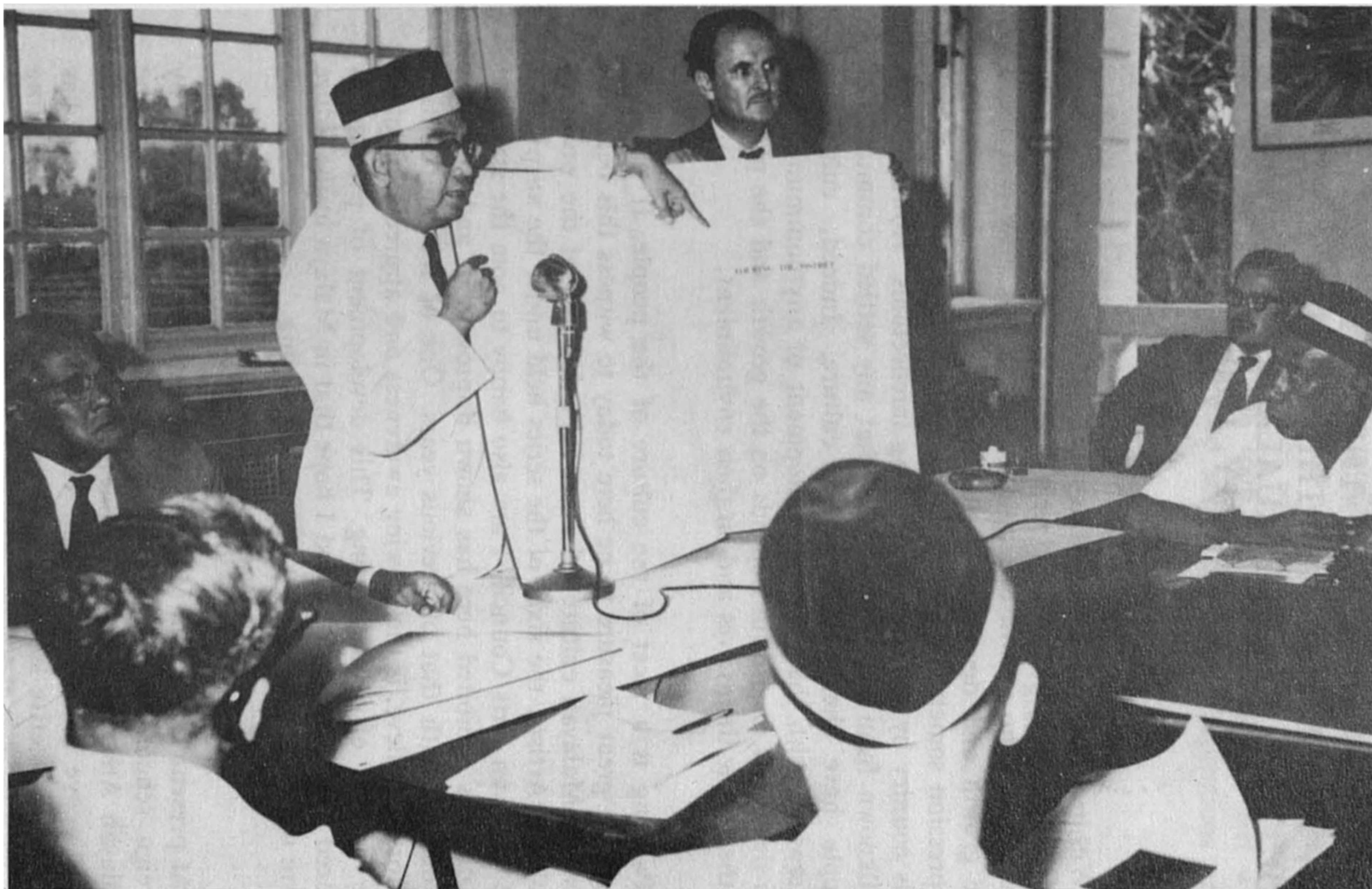
R.I.D.A. that you will be relieved of routine work. You will have to concentrate on supervising the work of the district officers and co-ordinating the work of departments to see that our plan is carried out. If you have to do a lot of routine work connected with R.I.D.A. obviously you would not be able to carry this out. But R.I.D.A. is completely with us in this and I have no doubt there is no difficulty in sorting this out and if necessary I am sure the Chairman of R.I.D.A. will be only too glad to assist you perhaps to appoint another officer to be your deputy or your assistant to carry out this routine work on your behalf. As I said you must endeavour to relieve yourself of unnecessary routine work to enable you not only to tour the State but also to supervise the work of the various departments and the district towns.

I say it is very important that all the State Departments and the District Officers are geared to this and the man who has to do this is you in the State and as I said the success of the work in the State will still have to depend on you. You cannot ask the Mentri Besar or the State Secretary to do this very much because they have other work to do but you will be solely expected to concentrate your energy on this work. So that is why I say you have indeed a very important role to play and I do hope that you will carry your duties with a spirit which we want you to carry out. It means hard work but we will have to do it.

Soon I think we shall be sending you instructions as how you should conduct your meetings but I think it is very important even as a start now for the State Executive Committee to meet regularly at least once or twice a week to have a morning prayer meeting early in the morning. It is very important that those officers connected with rural development to get together regularly so that will save correspondence; that the decision can be taken quickly. We here have decided now to have morning prayer twice a week for a start but it may be three times, maybe everyday but I hope the State Committee also will do that immediately and later on the District Committee. I am very pleased to see that the Mentri Besars have now taken my advice to get the D.Os. relieved of their unnecessary work. I have seen a number of circulars going round to District Officers and I hope you will see to it that the D.Os., Land Officers do get on with their jobs and that their energies and time are not dissipated to other work.

So well, gentlemen, as I said I do not like this meeting to be a very formal one; we want to have an informal discussion with you, we want to see more of you, to know more of you here and I hope personally to be able to attend most of the greater part of this meeting this morning so that I can contribute whatever I can towards the discussions. But the important thing as I said is that you should know the role that you have to play in this work. We here, the Federal Government, depend on you. To put it in a nutshell we depend on you for the success of this plan of ours. You are our link, our representative in the State and if you carry out your work well our plan in the State will succeed. So I do hope that you will carry out your duties and responsibility to the best of your ability and I can assure you whatever you do you will have the full backing and full support of the Prime Minister, myself and the whole of the Federal Government. So you will have no difficulty at all about getting your backing from us here round the table and from the Federal Government. Well gentlemen, I would not detain you much longer because I hope after this as you can see on the agenda a number of officers will talk to you but once again I would like to stress that I like this discussion to be very informal, to give you an opportunity to discuss frankly and fully various matters connected with rural development and we have earmarked the whole day for discussion. If necessary we can go on at night and if necessary we can extend till tomorrow or day after but I would not like you to leave Kuala Lumpur without fully realising or understanding your responsibilities and your duties.

Thank you very much.



Tun Abdul Razak sedang menerangkan kepada Jawatankuasa Pembangunan Luar Bandar, Negeri dan Daerah di Seremban mengenai rancangan pembangunan luar bandar di daerah-daerah tersebut pada 13hb Mei, 1960.