

**SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT THE
OPENING OF THE ONE - MAN EXHIBITION BY LEE
JOO FOR OF PENANG AT SELANGOR CLUB GALLERY,
KUALA LUMPUR ON 14TH DECEMBER, 1964**

Mr. Chairman, Encik Lee Joo For, Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was very pleased to accept the invitation to open this one-man Exhibition by a talented Malaysian artist, Encik Lee Joo For, of Penang.

In the course of my many duties as Minister of National and Rural Development, I find this occasion a most welcome change, because it gives me an opportunity to stress the fact that national development takes an all-round view of Malaysian life. It must deal not only with economic and social planning and achieve practical results for the nation as a whole, but must also embrace the cultural activities and ensure that encouragement and assistance in these fields are provided for.

Naturally, like all other projects we consider for the future well-being of the nation, there must be priorities. I wish to stress, however, that the cultural sphere is not and will not be overlooked. Let me give you one or two instances.

A project for the establishment of a National School of Arts has already been approved by the Government, and preparation of a Report on this subject is in the hands of the Ministry of Education.

During the past six years the Ministry of Education alone has provided no less than 188 scholarships and 128 bursaries for art training abroad so that until we have our own School of Arts the needs for art teaching and training are being met.

In addition, the Specialist Teachers' Training Institute in Kuala Lumpur has a Division of Art and Crafts which has already in the past four years developed much talent and revealed rich potential.

As you know, the National Art Gallery is a thriving institution, which has established a high reputation over the past seven years. The Board of Trustees which administers the Gallery has prepared plans to hold a

national competition among architects in Malaysia for a design for a new and permanent National Art gallery to be erected on a site already chosen in the Lake Garden area.

This project will be among those considered in drawing up the First Malaysian Five-Year Plan on which the Government is now working for presentation and discussion at this time next year. If all goes well, and nothing untoward occurs internationally, then the design should be ready in time to receive the blessing of the Government.

Another instance of the Government's encouragement of the cultural sphere is the Muzium Negara, which is one of the most popular places of interest in the National Capital. You will see, therefore, that the Government has been very active in the cultural field.

Encik Lee Joo For is a good example of the benefits obtained by study abroad, for he has had no less than five years in the United Kingdom, and returned home only a few month ago. He has brought back with him many new ideas and techniques in the field of graphic art, which should be most useful in inspring younger artists to tackle new media of expression in the fine arts.

He was already well-known as a painter in oils before he went abroad, but as you can see he has returned very much an artist whose chief interest is to stimulate and provoke thought by expressing philosophical ideas.

I am gratified to note that he has essayed the problems of confrontation and also the great changes taking place among the rural people in the face of the challenge of rapid economic progress and development in Malaysia.

I am sure this Exhibition will arouse great interest. With a wish for every success to Encik Lee Joo For in the future, I take very great pleasure now in declaring his Exhibition open.