

UCAPAN
YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI
SEMPENA MAJLIS PERASMIAN KILANG BAJA KEMIRA-KUOK FERTILIZERS
SDN BHD
DI WESPORT, PULAU INDAH, PELABUHAN KELANG
19 OKTOBER 1999

Saya ingin mengucapkan terima kasih kepada pengurusan Kemira-Kuok Fertilizers Sdn Bhd yang telah menjemput saya untuk merasmikan kilang ini pada hari ini.

2. Dengan terbinanya kilang seperti ini jelas terbukti bahawa pelabur asing masih yakin dengan kekukuhan serta pengurusan ekonomi negara Malaysia. dan dalam konteks ini saya ingin mengucapkan tahniah kepada Kemira-Kuok kerana daya-usahanya untuk bekerjasama bagi mendirikan kilang baja ini. Oleh itu saya mengalu-alukan pembinaan kilang ini.

3. Selain keyakinan pelabur asing melabur di negara ini, ini juga bukti bahawa Malaysia adalah sebuah negara yang stabil dari segi politiknya walaupun ada usaha-usaha yang dilakukan oleh pihak-pihak tertentu untuk menimbulkan huru hara di negara ini sejak negara mengalami krisis matawang. Malaysia juga menyediakan infrastruktur moden yang perlu bagi menarik minat dan keyakinan syarikat besar seperti Kemira ini.

4. Saya juga gembira kilang ini dilengkapi dengan teknologi terkini dan ini membuktikan bahawa syarikat-syarikat tempatan mampu mengusahakan sesuatu jika diberi peluang dan sanggup menerima dan mempelajari teknologi moden. Anggaphlah pelaburan ini sebagai pelaburan jangka panjang dan saya percaya ia akan memberi keuntungan dalam jangkamasa pendek memandangkan kerajaan Malaysia telah menjadikan pertanian sebagai wawasan negara.

Ladies & gentlemen

5. Kemira's-Kuok confidence in this country's economy is reflected in their decision to invest here when the country was going through the worst of the economic crisis in 1997. At a time when investors were leaving Asia in droves, many were influenced by negative reports and predictions by the prophets of doom.

6. Even then, we insisted that our economic fundamentals were strong and that our problems were caused by an abrupt withdrawal of short-term funds and the devaluation of our currency by speculators. Then, we were deemed heretics for going against the orthodoxy of IMF remedies and not many investors were willing to give us a chance.

7. Today, we see a strong recovery in our country and despite being the only Asian country affected by the crisis not to have taken IMF aid, we are proud to say that many of our former critics are now saying that Malaysia will have the strongest recovery.

8. Investors such as Kemira-Kuok, who showed their faith in us then, are now in the forefront and being the early birds, they are in position to reap dividends ahead of others.

9. The establishment of this factory marks a case where progress in industrialisation is employed to promote greater productivity in the agricultural sector. I am told that the compounds produced by the latest technology in this field will enhance fertilization of crops and lead to better yields for farmers.

Ladies & gentlemen,

10. The last two years have been an important learning curve for us. The outflow of funds, the drying up of investments and the depreciation in the ringgit distinctly reiterated the importance of the agricultural sector.

11. When food imports became too expensive, it was important to ensure that we could be close to self-sufficiency in food production to keep our import bills low.

12. As you are probably aware, despite the rapid industrialisation and modernisation in Malaysia over the last two decades, agriculture still plays a crucial part in our economy. Large areas of the country are cultivated with plantation crops such as oil palm, rubber and cocoa. Of equal importance are cash crops like padi, vegetables, fruits, pepper and other such crops which are planted in sizable areas. In fact, even as we move towards industrialised nation status, more than 3 million Malaysians are dependent on the agricultural sector. Today, Malaysia ranks among the top five producers in the world for palm oil, rubber, pepper and cocoa.

13. Since the early days of conventional methods in agriculture, we have seen much progress been made in areas such as palm oil refining, oleochemicals production, manufacture of rubber products and cocoa butter processing.

14. Fertilizers are the main ingredient in the processing of agricultural inputs. Hence, the production of NPK compounds by Kemira-Kuok is a major step in controlling the quality of our inputs and outputs.

15. I am pleased to hear that this factory will produce compounds especially formulated for Malaysian crops and soil.

Ladies & gentlemen,

16. Malaysia has always welcomed long-term genuine investors and we will continue with our investor friendly policies. We are firm believers in smart partnerships and win-win formulas. Therefore, when firms like Kemira Agro, the largest producers of NPK compounds, seek to invest in our country, we welcome them. They bring with them a wealth of experience and up to date technology in NPK fertilizer manufacture and we provide them investor friendly policies and the infrastructure to ensure they get good returns on their investment.

17. The Kuok group, on the other hand, is a home grown Malaysian conglomerate that has spread its wings all over Asia. The partnership between these two groups augurs well not only for them but also for the country in general and the agricultural sector in particular.

18. Today in Malaysia, three million tons of fertilizers are used annually. Of these, 650,000 metric tonnes are NPK compounds. The use of NPK compounds, which provide consistency in quality, have doubled from a decade ago. With this plant

coming onstream, I am confident that the use of NPK compounds in Malaysia will increase further.

19. Currently, 150,000 tonnes of NPK compounds used are imported. This is the area of the market where Kemira's-Kuok plant can substitute. This import substitution will reduce our foreign exchange outflow and take us another step towards self sufficiency in this sector.

20. I hope that with the reputation for excellence that these two companies have, we will be able to produce quality fertilizers which can compete with and maybe even improve upon the imported fertilizers we use currently.

Ladies & gentlemen

21. Once again, I would like to thank the management of Kemira-Kuok for having invited me to officiate at the opening of the plant here today. Please accept my sincere congratulations and I wish you every success for the future.

22. Dengan kata-kata itu, saya dengan sukacitanya merasmikan pembukaan kilang baja Kemira-Kuok.

Terima kasih.