

TALKING POINTS FOR  
THE HON'BLE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ON  
"AN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION"  
WHEN OPENING THE BATU PAHAT BRIDGE  
IN JOHORE ON 28TH JULY 1967

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**T**he State of Johore and the nation are somewhat unique in the developing world - we have vast areas of land suitable for agricultural development - Land which substantially exceeds the area now under agricultural production.

This is fortunate, indeed, because about **six million acres will be needed and needed well before the end of the century.**

Labour force in West Malaysia will grow from 2.7 million last year to more than 4.6 million in 1985.

Although we will push hard on industrial development, agricultural development must also expand to provide for all the new jobs we will require in the next twenty years. A minimum of 600,000 new jobs must be created in agriculture by 1985, 500,000 in manufacturing industry and some 900,000 in the services sector.

To do this will require the most dramatic land development effort in our history - a revolution in which the **Federal and State Governments and the private sector** must all participate to the very limit of their capacity.

This is no little problem - no small challenge of just finding a few hundred thousand acres more for this particular government programme or that. It involves a **bold effort** to abolish land scarcity in two short decades by a **policy which liberates every creative force in our society** (private and public) and mould them into a more gigantic and dynamic national effort.

Unfortunately we must undertake this task against a background of a very limited rate of land alienation for agricultural development in the past. We must catch up quickly.

During the 1961-1965 period, the FLDA developed about 337,000 acres and settled more than 60,000 families. Through the various state programmes, about 220,000 acres were planted, benefitting approximately 50,000 families. But during this period virtually no land was developed by the estate or private sector.

Although the achievements were impressive, much remains to be done to meet the rising expectations of our people. Our immediate problem is two-fold:

- i) To speed up the lagging land development effort in the three remaining years of the First Malaysia Plan and
- ii) To lay the ground work for the development of one million and a half acres in the Second Malaysia Plan. And all this in West Malaysia alone.

As of today, I am giving the following instructions to tackle these task:

- a) A small Task Force of Federal Officials shall go out to the major landed States next month to: discuss their immediate plans for land development; map out a balanced programme for private sector

participation in that development; and consult with State Governments as to how the Federal Government can most effectively assist them in their efforts: I want to know what is required to get off to a good start right now and what this means in terms of the 1968 Development Programme.

- b) This Task Force will also discuss with State authorities a plan for careful study of some one million to one million five hundred thousand acres of virgin and potentially rich areas which are to be developed in the Second Malaysia Plan. If we start our planning work today, we can carry out feasibility studies and prepare master plans for many Jengka-type of land development projects by the middle of 1970 and get on with actual development thereafter.

We hope to undertake these specialised studies largely with grant assistance from friendly nations. If we cannot obtain grants, we will borrow, and should that be insufficient, we will then use our own funds. I can think of no better use of money - of a no more dramatic programme for this nation's welfare.

If this programme can successfully be implemented by the year 1985, every worker who wants a job will have one and even the poorest of our families can look forward to at least a doubling of their income. This "Agricultural Revolution" in land development will trigger off an era of greater economic growth and prosperity for Malaysia and all Malaysians.