

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AT A
PRESS CONFERENCE IN RANGOON ON 28TH DECEMBER,
1965

I am very happy to have made this visit to Burma at the kind invitation of the Burmese Government. We in Malaysia have always been conscious of the traditional ties of friendship existing between Burma and Malaysia and of the need to strengthen these ties and to develop closer friendly cultural and economic relations between our two countries.

In the course of this visit I called on His Excellency General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and of the Council of Ministers. I feel greatly honoured that His Excellency General Ne Win showed me so much warmth, cordiality and friendship. We played golf together on two afternoons, and this gave us many opportunities to discuss matters of common interest in an atmosphere of cordiality and understanding.

In our discussions which ranged over a wide field we touched on economic and political developments in South East Asia. We agreed that such an exchange of views on vital matters of mutual interest is beneficial to both countries. The goodwill visit had provided us with the opportunity to learn more about each other's efforts to improve the standard of living of our respective peoples.

Burma and Malaysia bring developing countries anxious to devote their entire resources to economic development and national consolidation. In this respect there is a strong conviction on both countries that all nations should have the right to choose freely their own economic and political systems in keeping with their national interests and aspirations.

I was happy to have explained to me certain aspects of Burma's foreign policy. On the solution to international issues Malaysia shares the same view with Burma that such issues should be resolved through peaceful negotiations on the basis of respect for the independence and territorial integrity of each country.

During the tour I was most impressed with the tremendous effort and encouragement to revive, sustain and develop the rich cultural heritage of this country. As we are also engaged in similar effort it is my view that we can foster better understanding and friendship between our peoples by greater cultural exchanges. Similarly, there should be more exchanges in the sport, economic and cultural fields.

Malaysia has long trading relations with Burma but lately the trade has declined. As developing nations, efforts should therefore be made to increase this trade which would be mutually beneficial. To this end there should be more frequent visits by trade missions between Burma and Malaysia:

I delivered an invitation from the Prime Minister of Malaysia to His Excellency General Ne Win to visit Malaysia. I am happy that His Excellency has accepted the invitation and I hope that he would be able to visit Malaysia soon.

I wish to thank the Burmese Government for affording me and my delegation the opportunity to visit several places of interest such as Thauγγyi, Inle Lake, the Defence Services Command and General Staff College of Kalaw, Mandalay and the Air Force Training School at Meiktila.

Where I went I was touched by the sincere and unreserved expressions of welcome and goodwill. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the Burmese leaders, military officers and other government officials who have made this visit such a fruitful, enjoyable and memorable one.