

TEXT OF ADDRESS OF THE
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, AT THE INAUGURAL
MEETING OF THE MAJLIS AMANAH RAKYAT
(COUNCIL OF TRUST FOR THE
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE) AT THE
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS ROOM,
KUALA LUMPUR, ON 6TH JUNE, 1966.

"I would first of all like to thank you all for your willingness to serve on the Majlis.

It is exactly a year today since the Congress Economy Bumiputera met. In fact today is the anniversary of the Congress. You will recall one of the major decisions of the Congress was the re-organisation of RIDA and the formation of a new organisation in its place to be named MARA. After carrying out a simple post-mortem on RIDA I buried it in a simple ceremony in Parliament in November last year. Parliament then passed a new Act incorporating an entirely new organisation which is the Majlis Amanah Rakyat.

When MARA was in the process of being born, I paid particular attention that the new organisation should not inherit the faults and the besetting sins of RIDA. I saw to it that MARA must not only be but also prove to be a dynamic, progressive organisation properly led, properly run and properly administered in order to give every facility at every level of the economy so that the rakyat could effectively participate in the economic life of the country especially in the field of commerce and industry.

MARA will only undertake or promote projects which are sure of not less than 50% success and which are designed to facilitate genuine and real participation of the rakyat. This new concept, a concept which rightly reflects the spirit of MARA, and of the Congress Economy Bumiputera, should and must be understood by the rakyat because the success of MARA is as much the responsibility of the Majlis as the rakyat.

I believe in the dictum that to participate in business is to stay in business and avoid lapsing into operating one's business by rule of the thumb. MARA means to stay in business. MARA will not repeat the mistakes which sent RIDA to its grave.

To stay in business can be simple provided that one is prepared to set aside part of the profits from his business for the future exigencies, expansion and improvement of his business. If one makes a profit of \$100 a month at least \$25 of this profit should be set aside. If this principle is observed, I am convinced, problems affecting the capital of the business will not arise. This practice will not only help one to stay in business but also enables one to make a reasonable living from the business. I strongly commend this Simple principle to our small businessmen.

The Congress Economy Bumiputera adopted 69 resolutions which have already been accepted by the Government. It is my intention that a majority of these resolutions will have to be implemented by MARA. In the First Malaysia Plan the Government has already earmarked \$70 million for projects designed to increase and improve the participation of the rakyat in commercial activities. The details of the projects to be carried out by MARA are embodied in the Development Plan of MARA. In short, MARA will undertake to carry out economically viable projects on direct and joint ventures. It will expand its training programme progressively in line with the resolutions and the spirit of the Congress Economy Bumiputera. Its credit facilities will be programmed, intensified and supervised. It will continue to initiate and run bus services on new routes.

MARA will form corporations individually or in conjunction with Bumiputera companies in order to operate in specific sectors of the commercial field.

MARA will also purchase shares reserved for Bumiputera in certain pioneer industries. MARA's participation in the purchase of shares reserved for the Bumiputera is desirable if the objective of reservation of shares was to be achieved and real participation by the Bumiputera in this particular field to be realised. These shares will ultimately be sold to the Bumiputera when conditions and circumstances permit. MARA will work out the working details for the transfer of these shares to the Bumiputera.

MARA's participation in all its undertakings, either directly or jointly, is done on behalf of the rakyat. When the rakyat is ready and sufficiently trained, and when these projects have achieved a certain degree of viability, these projects will be handed over to them. In the existing circumstances, this is the only correct road to effective participation by the rakyat in the field of commerce and industry.

To back up the training and other programmes of MARA, a special division which deals with and makes available to Bumiputera entrepreneurs advice on all aspects of establishing and promoting a business. It will give advice on management and on optimum or maximum labour requirements, designs and other allied aspects of business.

The Advisory Services Division in conjunction with the other Divisions of MARA, will ultimately carry out a certain form of extension services in businesses strengthening the basis of commercial participation among our rakyat.

For the past one year I have directed all efforts in MARA towards gearing itself to face the challenges of the post-Congress Economy Bumiputera era. Seven autonomous divisions, each headed by a Director who is solely responsible for implementing the policies of MARA have been set up. This arrangement is aimed at ensuring efficient implementation of MARA policy decisions.

I have directed that there should be optimum delegation of power within the organisation. Sufficient delegation is essential and desirable. Our experience with RIDA has confined that one of the major defects which contributes to its impotency has been lack of delegation. The operations of RIDA bogged down in a confusion of bottlenecks because the organisation did not delegate its power sufficiently to the implementing bodies and organisations.

I must also say a few words about the composition of the Majlis. We have representatives of certain Ministries. We also have distinguished personalities in the commercial field both from Malaya and the two States of Sabah and Sarawak. The compendium of people from the two worlds, the business to the Government world, is intended to tap and exploit the best from the worlds for the efficient and effective existence and presence of MARA. I am sure

with the active support of the rakyat and with able leadership MARA would give significant contributions to the achievement of effective participation by the rakyat in commerce and industry and to the development of our country".

Thank you.