

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON HIS
RETURN TO KUALA LUMPUR FROM AN
OFFICIAL VISIT ABROAD ON 17TH OCTOBER,
1971

It is good to be home again after having been away now for some three weeks. It has been a strenuous but at the same time a very useful trip which has taken me for official business to New York, Washington, Ottawa, Vancouver, Los Angeles and Tokyo.

I went to New York to attend the General Assembly and besides making a statement at the United Nations at which I reiterated our neutralisation policy and outlined clearly our position on the China Question as well as our analysis of the current state of the United Nations, I took advantage of my presence there to hold discussions with a number of foreign leaders who were then also present at the United Nations. One of the most important of these discussions was the meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers which we convened on 2nd October at which many matters of common concern to the member countries of ASEAN were discussed, especially matters relating to recent developments in our area. We had very useful discussions and we agreed to meet again in Kuala Lumpur on 25th November.

In the course of my stay in New York I attended the Non-Aligned Ministerial Meeting and I am sure it has been a matter of great gratification to Malaysians to note the endorsement of that meeting of our proposal for the neutralisation of Southeast Asia. Among other discussions I had were those with a number of Foreign Ministers or Leaders of Delegation who called on me including the Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, the Khmer Republic, the Leader of the Delegation of Pakistan and the Secretary of State of the United States. I also had a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan with whom I discussed arrangements regarding the holding of the next meeting of the Muslim Conference.

As you may recall, arrangements were also being made when I left Kuala Lumpur, for me to take advantage of my presence in New York to make a trip to Washington for discussions with

President Nixon. These arrangements were confirmed and I was very happy to have had the opportunity to call on President Nixon on the 5th of October and to have very interesting and constructive discussions with him. During my very brief stay in Washington, which was only for some five hours, I also had a meeting with Mr McNamara, President of the World Bank, regarding assistance of the World Bank for the Second Malaysia Plan. I have invited Mr McNamara for further discussions in Kuala Lumpur and I am looking forward to his visit here on 16th-18th November.

An important aspect of this trip was my seeing businessmen, industrialists and bankers to explain to them the aims and strategy of the Second Malaysia Plan as well as the opportunities for investment in Malaysia. I therefore held discussions with a number of individual firms in New York, Ottawa, Vancouver, Los Angeles and Tokyo. I also addressed a business group at luncheon at each of these cities except Los Angeles where, owing to a public holiday, it was not possible to arrange such a meeting. I feel encouraged at the interest shown both during my discussions with individual firms as well as during the more general discussions at the various luncheons and I am confident that we will be seeing more private investors come to Malaysia from these countries in the near future. I should also perhaps add here that as part of the effort to win greater understanding for Malaysia and for the objectives of the Second Malaysia Plan I also gave a number of private interviews to the press and held a number of press conferences during the trip.

As you are aware, I also made an official visit to Canada and an official visit to Japan. Malaysia and Canada have enjoyed very close and cordial relations and Malaysia is an area of concentration for Canadian assistance. As for Malaysia/Japan relations, these have been developing over the years and relations between us can now be said to be very close. Both Canada and Japan are very important countries to us and it is important, therefore, that I should visit to have discussions at first hand with their leaders.

You will already have seen the communique issued at the conclusion of each of these visits and it is therefore unnecessary for me to elaborate on them now. It is enough that I should say that I had very fruitful, frank and cordial exchanges of views with Mr Trudeau and Mr Sharp in Ottawa and with Mr Sato in Japan.

As Mr Fukuda, the Foreign Minister, returned to Japan from an overseas tour with the Japanese Emperor late on Thursday evening, it was not possible for me to have discussions with him.

I was very happy to note from my discussions in Canada the sympathetic attitude shown towards our neutralisation proposal as well as our Second Malaysia Plan. In the course of my stay in Ottawa I signed a Loan Agreement with the Canadian Government for the Temenggor Hydro-Electric Extension Project for an amount of C\$46 million on very favourable terms. I am grateful to the Canadian Government for this assistance.

Likewise in Japan, I was happy to note the understanding shown towards our neutralisation proposal and the Second Malaysia Plan. As a result of my discussions with Mr Sato, the Japanese Government has now extended a new line of credit to Malaysia for (Yen) 36 billion which at the present rate of exchange amounts to some M\$330 million. Half the amount will be on soft loan from the Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund at 3.25 per cent rate of interest for twenty years with a grace period of seven years and half from the Export-Import Bank at 5.5 per cent rate of interest for eighteen years with a grace period of five years. I find these terms satisfactory. They are a definite improvement on the terms given for the first Yen Credit and I am grateful to the Japanese Government for their assistance. Other outcome of the discussion was the agreement that there would be annual meetings at official level to be held alternately in Malaysia and Japan to review all outstanding issues between our two countries I am pleased with this arrangement as I believe it is important that our officials should get together regularly to consider any problems between us and in this way promote greater understanding and co-operation between our two countries and peoples.

That in summary is what I have been doing in the last three weeks. All in all therefore it has been a very busy, constructive and fruitful visit. And now it is good to be home again.