

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
OVER RADIO MALAYA'S MERDEKA DAY
FEATURE "A MOMENT IN HISTORY" ON
31ST AUGUST, 1963

The underlying principle behind our Development Planning and the implementation of our Development Programme is based on a well-known international principle, that is that no Government however good or however efficient it may be, no matter how many hundreds or thousands of Government Officers it may have, no matter how many plans and policies it may have, no Government in the world can hope to succeed with a Development Programme unless it has the full support of the people themselves.

Such support cannot just be lip-service; it must be support in thought, in words, and more important in action.

And I should like to take this opportunity of thanking every Malayan whether he be near to the Federal Capital or whether he be living in the most remote kampong, in the most remote ulu.

I should like to say thank you and thank you very much indeed for the response which has been given by all of you during the years since we achieved Independence.

Thank you for playing your part in contributing to the success of our National Development Plan so far.

I am satisfied that we have achieved a considerable measure of success but, at the same time, it would be quite wrong of me not to admit that we have had difficulties and, looking to the future, we still have difficulties.

But let us go forward together and regard difficulties and problems, when they arise, not as blockages in our path of progress but rather let us regard them as challenges which, if used correctly, can be an inspiration towards renewing our energy and doubling our determination.

Time does not permit me to quote in detail the facts and figures of our achievements but I would like to take a few comparative examples to show you exactly what can happen when we the Government and you the people go forward together with one heart.

Pre-Independence our Road Programme consisted of a few miles of new roads per year but now by gearing the machinery of Government towards greater co-ordination, greater drive, and greater energy, I am glad to say that between the years 1960-63 alone we increased the road mileage throughout the country by no less than 1,600 miles; a figure which before Independence would have been regarded as something absolutely impossible.

Similarly, to give you another example—the increase of water supplies. Pre-independence the potential of development on water supplies could be more easily assessed not in gallons but in pints whereas the achievements of our National Development Programme so far, we have increased the output to something like 60 to 70 million extra gallons.

And we will go on increasing water supplies and many other things such as better schools, better health services, better communications, better opportunities, both in the rural and in the urban areas.

Another example of progress I may mention, The Federal Land Development Authority alone have succeeded in opening up 50 new Land Development Schemes giving a total potential of approximately 200,000 acres of new land under cultivation and eventual provision for no less than 16,500 new settlers.

In addition to the Federal Land Development Schemes, each State Government have gone ahead with their own land schemes opening up a considerable acreage of new land.

However, you will forgive me if, in talking to you today, I make an appeal to your good sense and your good judgment.

It is said in history books that "Rome was not built in one day" and neither can the aims or hopes of our development planning be achieved in one day.

There are many hundreds of projects in progress at present and there are plans for even more in the future, and we must move forward with sound planning and careful thought to ensure that what we do, and the funds we spent, are used to the greatest advantage for the greatest number of our people.

Looking to the future preliminary work of investigation such as soil survey and detailed planning is already well underway for the implementation of a large land development scheme such as has never been envisaged anywhere in the world.

It is a scheme of approximately 150,000 to 200,000 acres of land to be opened up and made available for those who have no land who are willing to start a new life in the true Malayan pioneering style by becoming settlers within this scheme.

Also, a survey has recently been completed by a team of experts generously supplied under the Colombo Plan by Canada.

This survey has laid the foundation plans for a new highway which will stretch roughly from Sungei Siput in the west to Kuala Berang in the East.

Not only will it provide a road of good access connecting east and west coast but also it will open up a new vista of our National Development, a new step forward in the development of Malaya with the great potential of mineral, agricultural, hydro-electric and other resources.

But all these new projects will mean nothing and will make no contribution to the development of our nation unless we, each and everyone of us, no matter where we are, no matter what we are, no matter what our daily task is, resolve to play our own part in the development of the nation by working harder and being more and more determined that our country will progress and progress at speed.

Therefore, I feel that Merdeka day should be celebrated not with a looking backwards, not with a historical memory of the past but rather with a determined looking forwards, with a renewed spirit and a renewed determination to carry our nation across the forward frontiers of the future towards an even more prosperous and happier Malaya.