

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE
SELANGOR CHINESE CHAMBER OF COM-
MERCE DINNER AT DRAGON COURT,
HOTEL MERLIN, KUALA LUMPUR ON 26TH
MAY, 1972

Y.B. Tan Sri Mohd. Tahir Tan,¹ Y.B. Menteri-menteri, Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan.

Terlebih dahulu, saya hendak menyatakan perasaan terimakasih saya dan isteri saya kepada Yang Dipertua dan ahli-ahli Dewan Perniagaan Cina Selangor atas jemputan menghadiri Majlis Makan Malam yang permai ini.

Saya juga mengambil kesempatan ini mengucapkan tahniah kepada Dewan ini yang telah meningkat umur enam puluh lapan tahun. Ini bolehlah dikatakan tempoh yang lama dan tidak syak lagi anggota-anggota Dewan ini mempunyai pengalaman yang matang dalam semua lapangan perniagaan dan juga perindustrian. Saya harap sempena dengan hari ulang tahun keenam puluh lapan ini, anggota-anggota Dewan ini akan membaharui sikap dan azam untuk memberikan khidmat yang bermakna kepada negara Malaysia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It would be a good thing on the occasion of an anniversary like this, for the members of your Chamber as of any organisation to make a reappraisal of your past performance and consider how best you can make your continued contribution to the well-being of our people and to the peace and stability of our country. In this context, I highly appreciate the renewed pledge for co-operation which your President expressed just now.

I am particularly happy to note that Government's New Economic Policy is now better understood, especially with respect to the restructuring of society and our policy to provide the less fortunate of our people with a more equitable share of the progress and prosperity of our country. This is a right and proper thing to do.

¹ Yang Dipertua Dewan Perniagaan Cina Selangor.

We must accept as a fact of life that ours is a multi-racial society and it would be dangerous to peace and stability of our country if our people continue to be compartmentalised according to trade and employment or confined to a particular habitat all their lives.

The Government has taken measures to ensure that for the future, all aspects of life should properly reflect our multi-racial population. We must altogether see that this objective is successfully achieved—for our own sake and for the sake of future generations.

In this connection, I have a special appeal to you all with regard to the employment of our youths who have been trained in vocational skills for industry.

The Government, in anticipation of the rising demand for skilled manpower, has been providing training facilities designed to fit our youths in our industries. For some reasons, the intake of these trained personnel has not met our expectation. Recently, I have directed the formation of the National Advisory Council on Industrial Training which I hope will see to it that this trained manpower is fully utilized both by the public and private sector. I hope this will work out satisfactorily.

I am in full agreement with Tan Sri Tahir regarding the need for regular consultation between the Malay Chamber and your Chamber, and for that matter, all the four Chambers with PERNAS and relevant Government Departments. I shall direct the Ministry of Trade and Industry to act on this matter expeditiously.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Coming to the subject of essential foodstuff and the need to stabilise prices, I can assure you all that the Government will do everything possible to safeguard the interest of consumers, particularly the low-income group. The difficulty as we all know is that commodities like sugar are subject to international market fluctuation. However, the Government is actively considering the establishment of a Sugar Board which I hope will pursue the suggestion made just now.

On the question of rubber, I am gratified to note that the price is going up again and the situation is not as bad as is made out to be. Nevertheless, I fully endorse the suggestion that we should continue to do intensive promotion overseas.

Our Minister of Primary Industries² who visited a number of European countries recently is at present considering a number of proposals to ensure stability of the price of our primary commodities. In the meanwhile, we will continue to modernise the industry, assisting the small-holders in replanting and production of SMR which will fetch them better return for the efforts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I sit down, I would like once again, on behalf of my wife and myself, to thank the members of the Selangor Chamber of Commerce for their pleasant evening. I hope the Selangor Chamber will continue to prosper in the long years ahead.

Thank you.

² Y.B. Encik Abdul Taib bin Mahmud.