

**MAJLIS MAKAN MALAM SEMPENA PELANCARAN YAYASAN HEPAR
MALAYSIA HOTEL SUNWAY LAGOON RESOR, PETALING JAYA,
SELANGOR, 13 OGOS 1997**

1. Terlebih dahulu saya ucapkan terima kasih kepada pihak Penganjur kerana menjemput saya untuk melancarkan Yayasan Hepar Malaysia pada malam ini.
2. Yayasan Hepar Malaysia adalah salah sebuah Yayasan yang terbuka kepada rakyat Malaysia yang ingin menyumbangkan tenaga dan masa untuk membantu mengawal penyakit hepar dan membantu mereka yang mengidap penyakit tersebut.
3. Pada hari ini terdapat kekurangan kemahiran dan kemudahan untuk menangani penyakit hepar di negara ini, khususnya dalam menjalankan pemindahan hepar. Alhamdulillah sekarang telah ada usaha untuk menubuhkan Yayasan ini supaya pelbagai program dan strategi dapat dijalankan untuk membolehkan negara ini menawarkan rawatan yang sebaik-baiknya dalam bidang hepatobiliari selaras dengan aspirasi negara untuk menjadi pusat kecemerlangan di rantau ini.
4. Rakyat Malaysia seperti rakyat negara lain juga tidak terhindar daripada serangan penyakit-penyakit sekiranya cara hidup mereka kurang baik atau mereka tidak menjalani pemeriksaan perubatan dari semasa ke semasa. Ada beberapa sebab tumpuan diberi kepada penyakit ini. Antaranya ialah bagi memastikan rakyat kita tidak diserang oleh sejenis penyakit yang memang boleh dibendung. Keduanya ialah kerana inilah salah satu cara yang baik bagi kita mengawal komplikasi-komplikasi bahaya seperti sirosis dan kanser hepar.
5. The liver is a very interesting organ. It is the largest organ in the body and is essential for life. It is in essence a chemical factory with over 100 complex functions. It is second only to our brain in its complexity and is vital for life. The liver fights infection, makes essential chemicals and filters poisons. The adult liver is as big as a rugby ball and has an amazing capacity to regenerate itself. Unlike people, it does not complain very much and can still function normally with half its size provided of course that half is normal. We need therefore to take care of our liver. If we do not, this non-complaining, complex chemical factory will break down and soon enough we too will break down and when that happens we have to look for a new liver, if there is one.
6. Liver disease can affect all ages. Thousands suffer and die each year from hepatitis, liver cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), and liver cancer. Hepatitis, a form of liver disease, is sometimes referred to as a silent killer much like high blood pressure as people who suffer from the disease often are not aware that they have the disease until too late. We can, however, overcome this silent killer with early diagnosis and better treatment.
7. Hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver, is a problem in Malaysia although the overall incidence appears to be decreasing. The total number of hepatitis cases reported in Government hospitals has declined from 2,450 in 1992 to 1,581 in

1996. Three types of hepatitis have been reported in this country. They are hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. There are other types of hepatitis called hepatitis D, hepatitis E and hepatitis G. I am not sure whether we will see the emergence of hepatitis M by the year 2020.

8. The estimated annual incidence of hepatitis A worldwide is about 1.5 million. The true incidence however may be 3-10 times greater. In Malaysia, the reported incidence of hepatitis A has decreased over the years with improvement in sanitation, water supply and personal hygiene.

9. Hepatitis A is, I am told, contracted by eating food or drinking water which has been contaminated with the hepatitis A virus. In the wake of the forthcoming Commonwealth Games next year, we must continue to be vigilant and ensure that no athlete or visitors to Malaysia comes down with this disease from now as it will cast a poor image of health standards in this country. I would like therefore to remind all Malaysians especially food handlers to be absolutely clean when they prepare food. The rest of us can help in this crusade by avoiding raw or inadequately cooked shellfish, raw salads and vegetables, untreated drinking water, ice cubes and unpasteurised milk and by maintaining a high standard of personal hygiene.

10. There is an estimated 50 million new cases of hepatitis B annually with 1.5 million deaths due to its complications which include cirrhosis and liver cancer. Like hepatitis A, the incidence of hepatitis B in Malaysia has also declined over the years.

11. Primary liver cancer is one of the top 10 cancers reported among Malaysian males in Malaysia. The major risk factor is cirrhosis from any cause. Hepatitis B is the most important cause in this region.

12. Liver cancer can be cured if discovered early i.e when the tumour is small and the rest of the liver is normal. Unfortunately up to 80 percent of patients with liver cancer in Malaysia present too late for curative treatment mainly because it is difficult to detect in the early stages as the initial symptoms are usually vague.

13. These are some of the reasons why the Malaysian Liver Foundation is established. By increasing public awareness on the early symptoms of the disease and the diagnostic facilities and treatment available, the Foundation is hopeful that the disease can be curbed. By preventing hepatitis B and C, one can expect a decline in the incidence of liver cancer.

14. There are no special machines to take over the functions of the liver. If it fails completely or becomes seriously damaged, the only solution is a liver transplant. Liver transplantation is the only solution for end-stage liver disease. In Malaysia, there are at least 2,000 new cases of end-stage liver disease each year. Of these, 10 per cent will require a liver transplant. For organ transplantation to succeed, we need public co-operation and education. Organ donation in this country is rather slow. I hope the Liver Foundation will join forces with the Ministry of Health and other relevant organisations to embark on an active public

education on organ donation nationwide.

15. I am encouraged by the enthusiasm shown by the Trustees and the Executive Committee and members of the Malaysian Liver Foundation. By working closely with people suffering from liver disease, their families and friends, health professionals, medical practitioners and researchers, the foundation will succeed in enhancing the standards of care, garnering public support and improving the quality of treatment for hepatobiliary diseases.

16. To make a greater impact in this region, we also need to invest in basic and clinical research. Research offers hope for the future and the possibility of prevention, better treatment and cure of liver disease.

17. I urge all Malaysians to continue supporting the Malaysian Liver Foundation in its efforts to combat the disease and promote excellence in diagnosis and treatment.

18. Saya ucapkan terima kasih sekali lagi kepada pihak Penganjur kerana menjemput saya dan isteri saya untuk hadir di Majlis pada malam ini. Saya harap kita akan berusaha dengan gigih untuk memberi rawatan yang sebaik mungkin kepada rakyat kita dan juga sesiapa sahaja di rantau ini yang memerlukan rawatan yang terkini dan canggih daripada kita.

19. Saya harap kita dapat menyediakan semua program yang berkaitan dan dapat membuat persiapan ke arah menawarkan kemudahan-kemudahan pemindahan hepar kepada rakyat kita supaya mereka tidak perlu lagi pergi ke luar negeri untuk mendapat rawatan ini.

20. Malaysia boleh dan Malaysia akan terus berjaya dalam apa jua bidang yang diceburi rakyatnya, Insya Allah. Marilah kita bersama-sama menuju ke alaf berikutnya dengan semangat yang kuat, badan yang teguh, hati yang tabah dan hepar yang sihat.

21. Dengan ini saya dengan sukacitanya merasmikan Pelancaran Yayasan Hepar Malaysia.