

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: A LUNCHEON IN XIAN

VENUE: XIAN, CHINA

DATE: 26 NOV 1985

TIME:

Excellencies;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all Excellency, may I, on behalf of my wife and members of my delegation, express my appreciation and gratitude to you and the Government of Shaanxi for the very warm welcome you have extended to us. Though our visit to your historic city is but a short one, we will take away with us some very pleasant memories of your friendship and cordiality.

2. Excellency, in visiting Xian today, I am following a well-beaten path taken by many visitors to your country in search of the ancient splendour of early Chinese civilisation. I refer of course to what is now known as the Qin Army Museum created by the man who built the Great Wall and unified China, Qin Shi Huangdi, on whom is bestowed the title of "Founder of the Chinese Nation". I look forward to my visit to that historic site later this afternoon.

3. In recalling the achievements of this great Chinese Emperor, I note that while he laid the groundwork for a unified China, it took you many, many years, and much toil and sacrifice to evolve the unity and sense of nationhood that you now enjoy. This is an important lesson that we can all draw from history. National unity does not come easily and it is often the outcome of years of toil and sacrifice. We in Malaysia also embarked on this task though much later, beginning with our independence in 1957. Our task was complicated by the very diversity of our peoples. We hope that the experience of your own struggle beginning with the first step taken by Qin Shi Huangdi will forever render China supportive and sympathetic of our own efforts at national unity.

4. Before I conclude, may I once again thank Your Excellency and the Government of Shaanxi Province for receiving us so warmly and attentively today.

5. May I now invite you all to join me in a toast to:-
- the good health of His Excellency

- and to the future success and
prosperity of this historic city.
Thank you.