

UCAPAN OLEH: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PERDANA MENTERI)

UPACARA: UPACARA PERASMIAN KILANG SYARIKAT BAXTER HEALTHCARE

TEMPAT: BAYAN LEPAS, PULAU PINANG

TARIKH: 24 MAY 1988

MASA:

Yang Amat Berhormat Dr. Lim Chong Eu,
Ketua Menteri Pulau Pinang;
Yang Berhormat Menteri-Menteri;
Yang Berhormat-Yang Berhormat;
Yang Berbahagia Encik Jeffery Roski,
Presiden Kemajuan Perniagaan
Baxter Healthcare;
Yang Berbahagia Encik D. Michael Deignan,
Naib Presiden/Pengurus Besar
Syarikat Baxter;
Dif-Dif Kehormat;

Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan sekalian,
Saya mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Lembaga Pengarah
Syarikat Baxter Healthcare kerana menjemput saya merasmikan
kilang syarikat ini. Terbinanya kilang ini menandakan
selangkah lagi ke arah kemajuan kita dalam perindustrian
yang menggunakan sumber-sumber tempatan.

Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan,

2. Salah satu pendekatan perindustrian kita ialah
menggalakkan industri-industri yang menggunakan sumber
tempatan, terutama bahan-bahan utama negara seperti getah,
minyak sawit, kayu tropika, koko dan bijih timah. Strategi
ini bermakna kita menggalakkan peningkatan nilai atau
value-added kepada bahan-bahan utama kita sebelum dieksport.
Kalau dua-tiga dekad dahulu eksport kita adalah dalam bentuk
bahan-bahan mentah sahaja, hari ini semakin banyak
bahan-bahan mentah keluaran utama kita yang telah diproses
kepada barangan separa-pengguna dan barangan pengguna.
Dengan ini, kita bukan sahaja meninggikan pendapatan kita
tetapi ramai daripada rakyat kita dapat menumpang dengan
bekerja dalam kilang-kilang pemerosesan ini. Walau
bagaimanapun masih banyak lagi bahan-bahan mentah negara
kita yang dieksport tanpa diproses. Oleh itu, para usahawan
dan pemodal hendaklah mengkaji kemungkinan industri-industri
pemerosesan yang sesuai diadakan di negara ini. Jika
kita tidak mempunyai teknologi, orang asing harus dipelawa
sebagai rakan usahasama atau pemilik perusahaan-perusahaan
ini.

3. Sehubungan dengan ini, saya mengucapkan tahniah kepada
Syarikat Baxter yang telah membina kilang untuk mengeluarkan
barangan yang menggunakan getah asli kita. Kilang ini juga

dapat menyediakan banyak peluang pekerjaan kepada rakyat negara kita, yang mana ini sudah menjadi tujuan utama dasar ekonomi negara. Kita perlu bahagikan nikmat pertumbuhan ekonomi kepada semua rakyat Malaysia.

Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan,

4. Upacara hari ini dihadiri oleh ramai para eksekutif Syarikat ini dari luar negeri. Oleh itu izinkan saya berucap juga dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

Ladies and Gentlemen

5. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Baxter Healthcare Inc. for the initiative they have taken in expanding their manufacturing facilities in Malaysia. I would like to assure you, and other investors, that the Malaysian Government will do its utmost to ensure that the economic environment of this country continues to be such that you will continue to be able to manufacture, expand and to be profitable. The millions of Ringgit that the Government is spending on infrastructure, the continuous improvement of government machinery to ensure speedy approvals and facilitate implementation of projects, are all intended to maintain an investment climate in Malaysia that is second to none. I give you my assurance that we will continue to ensure that Malaysia offers one of the most viable environments for offshore manufacturing operations.

6. I am sure all of you are aware that Malaysia of late has been receiving a considerable amount of negative publicity in the international media. The comments range from allegations that democracy is being threatened in Malaysia to denunciations of Malaysians as barbarians. We are helpless to defend ourselves as those controlling the international media carry out a very effective censorship which denies us the right to give our side of the story. However, companies such as Baxter Healthcare which have not only one operation in this country, but have set up their second and third facilities and which have invested almost U.S. \$100 million in Malaysia, employing more than 3000 workers and are still expanding, should be sufficient proof to those who look towards Malaysia for new investments, that all these comments in the media are just so much lies borne of envy at the ability of this country to prosper and to recover under its own steam. We are not embittered by these crude attacks and we will continue to welcome foreigners as investors or as tourists.

7. I hope that companies such as yours and other foreign manufacturers in Malaysia will help us disseminate correct information about this country and the opportunities it offers to foreign investors, that is Malaysia is safe and stable and is eminently suited as a profit centre for all kinds of manufacturing activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Malaysia, as you are well aware, is the world's largest exporter of several primary commodities. However, of late, we have been experiencing a phenomenon that is not often experienced in developing countries. The last time we had experienced this was in the early 1970's when a wave of investments in the electronics industries hit our shores. American industrialists were in the forefront of this first wave. Today, there are 17 factories belonging to the American Electronics Industry Group with investments exceeding \$1.5 billion Ringgit. It is significant that the industry has projected an annual investment of over \$300 million Ringgit over the next 5 years. Thus, it can be expected that by 1993, the total investment by American electronic companies alone in Malaysia will be in excess of 3 billion Ringgit. We are happy at this prospect but we realise that the state of the world's economy will determine actual investments. We will be busy encouraging other investments as well.

9. Today we are experiencing another wave in the form of projects for the manufacture of household, industrial, examination and surgical gloves. To-date, the Government has approved 149 projects for the manufacture of various types of gloves, 28 of which are already in production with an approved total capacity of 825 million pairs of gloves. The trend continues and more than 100 new applications are now being considered by the Government.

10. At one time, it was thought that the tyre industry in Malaysia would be the largest consumer of rubber. However, today latex goods manufacturers have far exceeded the tyre manufacturers in Malaysia as the single largest consumer of rubber.

11. Malaysia currently produces more than 34% of the world's natural rubber. There is an abundant supply of rubber in Malaysia and any fears that Malaysia is about to run short of rubber is totally unfounded. The Government will refrain from interfering but rubber producers must remember how high prices and shortages led to synthetic rubber. Do not be too sure there will be no substitute for natural latex.

12. Today in Malaysia, we have not as yet fully expanded the potential for rubber products manufacturing. I say this in the context of the performance of other Asian non-rubber producing countries. South Korea, for example, in the first 11 months of 1987 has consumed approximately 375,000 tons of rubber and Taiwan in the first 10 months of 1987 consumed more than 97,000 tons of rubber. Malaysia, the world's largest producer of rubber on the other hand, consumed only 87,600 tons of rubber for the whole of 1987.

13. To increase local rubber products for export the Government has provided a number of incentives. However,

these incentives will come to nought if raw material cost becomes prohibitive. Manufacturing activities and exports will earn us more if apart from Government incentives producers can do their bit. Once we have really big rubber-based industries, our products will become cheaper and we will be able to overcome the problems of exporting bulky finished rubber products. In the meantime, we should be more prudent and not allow greed to overcome the wisdom of long term strategies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. More than a hundred years ago there was not a single rubber tree in Malaysia. The rubber plant originated from Brazil. Today Malaysia is the world's largest producer of rubber. More than fifty years ago, there was not a single oil palm tree in this country. Then a few plants were imported from Africa for ornamental purposes. Today Malaysia is the world's largest exporter of palm oil. In 1970, there was not a single 100% export oriented manufacturing operation in this country. Today Malaysia is amongst the world leaders in the export of electronic semi-conductors, room air-conditioners, rubber gloves, catheters and swimming caps.

15. We are not yet a Newly Industrialising Country. Indeed, we are far behind them. But that does not discourage us. We are going to strive to better the living standards of Malaysians in every walk of life. The Government will be pragmatic. If policy changes or different approaches are needed, we will always be prepared to consider them. Indeed, we have liberalised our attitudes towards foreign investments considerably. Still our liberalism must be tempered by our need to ensure that every community has a fair share in the economy. Rapid economic growth will become meaningless if it destabilizes the country.

Tuan-tuan dan puan-puan,

16. Ekonomi negara yang lembab sebelum ini akibat kemelesetan ekonomi dunia sekarang telah mula pulih. Bank Negara meramalkan ekonomi negara akan berkembang sebanyak 4.7% tahun ini. Satu institusi ahli-ahli ekonomi meramalkan pertumbuhan yang melebihi 5%. Pertumbuhan ini akan kita capai sekiranya tidak terdapat usaha-usaha yang negatif, yang mengeruhkan suasana dan iklim politik negara.

17. Kerajaan telah mengambil berbagai langkah untuk memulihkan semula ekonomi negara. Tetapi Kerajaan dengan sendirinya tidak mungkin berjaya. Setiap warganegara Malaysia mempunyai tanggungjawab dalam pemulihan ekonomi negara. Janganlah kerana irihati politik, kita tergamak memburukkan imej negara kita di luar negeri sehingga menakutkan para pelabur dan para pelancong asing. Perbuatan ini akan menjejaskan pemulihan dan pertumbuhan ekonomi yang mana ia akan menyebabkan pekerja dan siswazah kita menganggur. Demikian juga usaha yang sengaja untuk

memberi gambaran bahawa iklim politik negara tidak stabil. Ini juga memberi kesan yang buruk terhadap perkembangan ekonomi.

18. Jika kita mahu kemajuan, kita harus sanggup berkorban sedikit dahulu. Kita harus ketepikan kepentingan diri. Insya-Allah dengan menolong negara sendiri menjadi lebih menarik dan lebih produktif, akhirnya kita semua akan mendapat ganjaran dengan peningkatan taraf hidup kita. Oleh itu, bersabarlah. Kita akan mendapat balasan yang baik kemudian.

19. Saya sudahi dengan mengucapkan berbanyak terima kasih kepada pengurusan Syarikat Baxter kerana memberi peluang kepada saya berucap pada pagi ini. Dengan ini, saya dengan sukacitanya membuka kilang Syarikat Baxter Healthcare ini dengan rasminya.