



SIARAN AKHBAR

Diterbitkan Oleh Jabatan Penerangan Malaysia

Dr Mahathir X

PEN. 8/96/5 (PM)

EMBARGO: Jumaat, 2.8.96, 10.00 mlm

Speeches

PM3.TXT

UCAPAN OLEH PERDANA MENTERI
YAB DATO SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
DI MAJLIS FELLOW KEHORMAT AKADEMI SAINS MALAYSIA
DI HOTEL ISTANA, KUALA LUMPUR
PADA HARI JUMAAT, 2 OGOS 1996
PUKUL 8.00 MALAM

Saya bersyukur kepada Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala kerana dengan izin-Nya dapat kita hadir di Majlis Malam Akademi pada malam ini. Terlebih dahulu saya ingin merakamkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan dan ucapan terima kasih kepada Akademi Sains Malaysia di atas penganugerahan Fellow Kehormat (Hon. Fellow) kepada saya pada malam ini. Saya juga mengucapkan tahniah kepada enam orang Fellow Akademi yang baru.

2. For many Malaysians, Science and Technology (S&T) is still strange and even incomprehensible. But like everything else science and technology will not remain strange for long if we apply ourselves to mastering them. And this we can do because science and technology are logical and precise. The behaviour of materials whether chemically or physically does not change. And so once we know we need only to remember. Unlike the arts which vary according to the perceptions of people, no variation is possible for any scientific or technological reaction merely because different people observe it. The laws which govern scientific and technological behaviour are mere statements of what will always happen and not what may happen when the laws which normally govern our society are applied by different judges. Scientific laws are learnt and not formulated according to the wishes of society. Once these scientific laws are known, the reactions under any circumstance can be quite precisely predicted. There is no magic in the discoveries and inventions by the great societies and technological geniuses. It was a

matter of applying known scientific laws to differing situations repeatedly and tirelessly, using all the techniques and instruments available until the correct formula is found. Inspiration is useful, but hard work counts more. We need not be geniuses to make scientific or technological advancements, but we do need to be determined and dedicated.

3. Malaysia in the year 2020 hopefully will be a scientifically progressive, innovative and forward-looking society with the capacity to make significant contributions to the scientific and technological world. This vision is not a dream because Malaysia in 1957, recognising the importance of Science and Technology (S&T) in development, enshrined it in the Rukunegara and incorporated it in the national education system. Thus, primary and secondary schools, universities and polytechnics have already implemented science as the key discipline to produce a skilled and competent scientific workforce. The rapid, modern technology-based industrialisation bears testimony the correctness to our efforts.

4. An important prerequisite to progress is a balanced approach to S&T development. Today, nations look forward to S&T for salvaging stagnant economies and overcoming misery and poverty. And so we need to focus on applied research, looking for what is relevant and useful for us and our society. Research for the sake of knowledge may eventually result in something useful, but we do not have the money or the time for this luxury.

5. Recognising the importance of infrastructure as one of the prerequisites for a sustained S&T development, Malaysia has established several agencies. Among them are the Malaysian Technology Development Corporation (MTDC), the Malaysian Industry-Government Group on High Technology (MIGHT) and the Malaysian Invention and Design Society (MINDS). These agencies provide institutional and support infrastructures and are themselves involved in S&T management and implementation.

6. The trend towards globalisation of business requires a strong public and private sector partnership. Globalisation requires coordination of available technological resources to mutually benefit businesses operating in a number of host countries. This government-industry partnership must work towards strengthening our current comparative advantage so as to sustain, and even enhance our competitiveness. Strengthening the indigenous technological capacity and capability requires concerted effort to ensure acquisition of foreign technology. We can expect that others will not transfer all their technology to us. But we need to know as much of the basic as possible for us to develop the rest. We must always remember that when we come upon anything new and valuable in terms of our own research, we do not rush to transfer it to others.

7. Indeed our culture is against the transfer of our specialised skills to others. Thus while Western doctors report regularly in the medical journals about their findings in the treatment of some diseases or other, our 'dukuns' or 'bomohs' would never dream of telling anyone their secret cure. And so many useful cure dies with the practitioner.

8. We have to get over this cultural mental block. We have to report our discoveries because it is good for the progress of mankind. Our reward should be recognition by society through such awards as the Nobel Price. We can of course patent our discovery and be paid royalty for the rights. But the worse thing we can do is to carry out knowledge and our skills to the grave. Let us think of this sometimes when we complain about others not wanting to transfer technology to us.

9. The Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) is a congregation of the top scientific and technological minds in our country. ASM is well poised to participate in high-level thinking and deliberation of scientific and technological issues. It can play an important role in formulating proposals for the consideration of the Government.

10. I am happy to note that the Academy of Sciences Malaysia, since its inauguration in September 1995, has been able to formulate and implement programmes that impact on creating S&T awareness among the public via workshops, public lectures and orations on subjects related to the latest developments in S&T. It has also managed to produce a number of publications.

11. Once again I would like to thank the Academy of Sciences for the honour conferred on me by the award of Honorary Fellow of the Academy. I pray that one day the term 'Academician' would be exclusive to those elected to be real (not honorary) members of the Academy of Sciences, a title that will be honoured by the academic circles and by society at large.

Thank you.

Kuala Lumpur

2hb Ogos, 1996 (dikekluarkan pada pukul 4.00 petang)

IH/csl/jh.