

UCAPAN YANG DI PERTUA BAKTI
DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BTE HAJI MOHD. ALI
DI MAJLIS MALAM AMAL DAN PERTUNJUKAN FESYEN
DI DEWAN NIRWANA, HOTEL HILTON KUALA LUMPUR
PADA HARI SABTU 4HB. SEPTEMBER, 1982,
JAM 8.00 MALAM

Malam ini adalah malam yang bersejarah dan berbahagia bagi BAKTI kerana dengan limpah kurnia Tuhan yang Maha Esa dan Penyayang, BAKTI telah dapat menganjurkan projek amalnya bagi kali yang ke-6 malam ini. Berlain daripada rancangan amal BAKTI pada tahun-tahun yang lampau, BAKTI kali ini menganjurkan Jamuan Makan Malam pula, disertai oleh satu Pertunjukan Fesyen yang paling istimewa oleh Perbadanan Kemajuan Kraftangan Malaysia, dan pamiran dan jualan kraftangan dari KARYANEKA.

2. Oleh itu, saya mengalu-alukan kehadiran tuan-tuan dan puan-puan dan mengucapkan selamat datang serta berbanyak terima kasih, khasnya kepada Yang Amat Berhormat Penaung BAKTI dan tetamu-tetamu kehormat yang sudi menerima undangan BAKTI untuk menyerikan lagi majlis ini.

3. Sempena dengan thema Hari Kesihatan Se Dunia 1982, BAKTI mengambil kesempatan mengenang orang-orang tua, yang saya rasa tiada seorang pun berada di dalam Dewan ini. Thema yang berbunyi "Adding Life to Years" adalah serentak dengan thema United Nations World Assembly di Vienna pada bulan Ogos lalu mengenai keadaan menjadi tua atau "aging". Organisasi yang terbesar ini menegaskan betapa pentingnya perhatian individu dan Kerajaan seluruh dunia kepada penjagaan orang-orang tua, khasnya dalam bidang pencegahan, perubatan dan pemulihan. Di samping itu, adalah penting juga kita menjaga supaya kaum tua ini tidak diasingkan daripada keluarga, perumahannya yang biasa dan maruah mereka

sebagai orang yang masih berguna. Kajian telah menunjukkan bahawa bilangan orang-orang tua kian meningkat setiap tahun. Pada tahun 1970, peratus orang yang berumur lebih daripada 65 tahun di Malaysia adalah 3.1 peratus. Ini meningkat kepada 3.6 peratus pada tahun 1978 dan dijangka pada tahun 1990, peratus ini akan meningkat lebih lagi.

4. Saya ingin berucap sedikit mengenai thema "Adding Life to Years" dan memohon izin berucap dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

5. Nobody likes to speak about "age" simply because the word "old" brings an image of a tottering, crochety battered person, incapable of loving, taking care of himself nor contributing usefully to his family and society. Any attempt of the aged person to regain his youth and put life into his years is considered "second childishness", or worse than that, when driven by loneliness and deprivation of home care, he marries again, the aged person is labelled an old Cassanova, suffering from a seven-year old itch!

6. The common picture of old age is therefore unfortunately very much a picture of disability, weakness and dependence. It is more so unfortunate that people equates AGING with worthlessness. Aging is a normal phase of life and should be regarded as such. It is also a state of mind. One can be old at sweet sixteen going on to 17, while be young and superbly active at 80 going on to 90!

7. For purpose of policy making and legislation, WHO has given a chronological definition, placing the level of old age at 60 years, but practice and research, it says, have found that there is a sharp distinction in those between age-group of 60-75 and age-group of 75 and above. Those in the younger 60-75 age-group are in passage from active life to retirement and adaptation to it. Due to the aging process itself and disabling conditions, those in the 75 and

over age-group are in the passage from physical and mental independence to dependency.

8. In Malaysia, the majority of retired Government servants are independent and still actively contributing to the society and family. Most of them are at the top of their faculties and skills and represent an impressive potential production force essential to a developing country such as ours.

9. On the other hand, the older 75 plus age-group are the most vulnerable and who require special attention from the healthy individuals, if they are to still be contributors to the family and society. One of the special needs for the elderly is care, not just being "taken care of", but being "cared for" and "cared about."

10. By tradition and culture, we in Malaysia follow the extended family system in which we incorporate the elderly into the life of the family and the community. Respect for the elders is unquestionable. No family event is complete without the "orang tua". Indeed, traditionally wisdom and experience are equated with age.

11. Because of the special needs and special role they play in the family and community, the family home is undoubtedly the ideal and best place for the aged to be accepted, to love and be loved. However, there will be a minority of aged people for whom and for various reasons the transfer to institutions and nursing homes becomes unavoidable. The Ministry of Welfare Services and a few private agencies have homes for the aged without families or those abandoned. BAKTI members have visited a few of these homes and, while appreciating the good service rendered to the residents, wished that a lot more could be done to ensure that the elderly residents, not only have care and comfort, but also spend their final years pleurably, healthily and usefully.

12. You are here tonight to help BAKTI achieve this wish. The donations and proceeds of tonight's Dinner will go to assist these institutions and homes throughout Malaysia. Also we hope to assist in programmes related to the welfare of the aged and the aging. We have in Kuala Lumpur the Home Nursing Association, whose service to the terminally ill and the aged sick in their own homes, is not so known. There are only 3 nursing personnel who do home visits for many old people in Wilayah Persekutuan. We would like to encourage such services so that they will be utilised by those aged people staying at home.

13. I do not intend to remind you and myself of our age and "forthcoming attractions" but merely to stress BAKTI's aim to respond to WHO and UN's appeal to assist our aged community so that more life may be added to their years.

14. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to the overwhelming response you have so kindly made. To the sponsors of this dinner, generous donors and friends of BAKTI, we would like to assure you that your generous donations will be well utilised and we thank you for being sympathetic.

15. Fortunately, I have a young force who organized tonight's Charity Dinner and Fashion Show. I am grateful to Kraftangan Malaysia and Karyaneka for their contribution and assistance. Coordination was made by our Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Datin Maria Musa, v/ho ably and energetically went round herself to appeal for donations. I wish to thank her and her team of Committee members who worked extremely hard to make this evening a success. I hope you will forget everything I have said about age and relax and enjoy the dinner and fashion show.

Sekian sahaja, terima kasih.
