

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE OPENING OF THE 5TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EAST ASIA COMMITTEE OF LLOYD'S REGISTER OF SHIPPING AT THE KUALA LUMPUR HILTON ON 4TH DECEMBER 1979.

I wish to thank the East Asia Committee of Lloyd's Register of Shipping for choosing this country to hold its 5th Annual Meeting, and for inviting me to say a few words. I wish also to extend a very warm welcome to the committee, their wives and others.

As you know, Malaysia depends greatly on the export of its primary commodities. It is therefore important that we develop our shipping services to transport our exports: Furthermore, as we develop economically, and as our trade expands, we will need more ships. We are adopting UNCTAD'S ratio of 40:40:20. At present, we are far away from it. We are planning to increase our national fleet to 3 million tons deadweight from the present 1.3 million tons. The major part of this increase will be in the Malaysian International Shipping Corporation's fleet. It will of course take time. Even then, it will still be inadequate and we will have to rely greatly on foreign ships.

We are encouraging shipping companies to register their ships in this country. In addition to their participation in Malaysia's International Trade, these companies will also enjoy tax and other benefits. We have recently simplified the procedures for registration.

We have also adopted the Cabotage Policy, under it, only Malaysian flag carriers will be allowed to participate in domestic trade. All carriers will be licensed by the Malaysian Shipping Licensing Board. This new rule will come into effect from 1st January, 1980. We hope that entrepreneurs will take advantage of this to expand our domestic shipping services.

We are also developing our ship building and ship repair industries. A number of ship building and ship repair yards have been built in the country. We are hopeful that they will be fully utilised.

In all these developments, the shipping industry in this country has often depended on Lloyd's for advice and guidance on safety standard. Lloyd's has a reputation for high standard of service and integrity.

I understand that one of the objectives of this meeting is to provide a forum to discuss the development and growth of the Malaysian Shipping Industry. With as many experts taking part, I am sure that this meeting will be useful and beneficial to all concerned. I wish it every success.