

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID
Tajuk : MAJLIS MAKAN MALAM PRA-JUSA 1/96
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1. Saya ucapkan tahniah kepada tuan-tuan dan puan-puan yang telah dipilih untuk mengikuti kursus Pra-Jawatan Utama Sektor Awam (Pra-JUSA) pada kali ini.

Walaupun tujuan berkursus ini ialah untuk memenuhi keperluan Sistem Saraan Baru (SSB), namun demikian pada saya, setiap kali kursus sebegini diadakan ianya telah mengumpulkan pegawai-pegawai tinggi kerajaan dari berbagai bidang yang mempunyai berbagai pengalaman, kepakaran, bakat dan ilmu pengetahuan. Kursus ini adalah memberi peluang bagi tuan-tuan dan puan-puan untuk berbincang dan bertukar-tukar pendapat di antara peserta-peserta sekalian. Pada malam ini, saya suka menjelaskan mengenai nilai-nilai yang patut diterapkan oleh pegawai-pegawai tinggi Kerajaan.

2. Senior civil servants who carry out their responsibilities in a professional manner can be fairly assured of their job security until the mandatory retirement age of 55. This job security is provided for under Article 135 of the Federal Constitution. As you are aware, through this provision, public servants are protected from any exercise of arbitrary power from any quarters. Max Weber drives home another point, and I quote him: "Civil servants should obey orders exactly as if the order agreed with his own convictions. This holds even if the order appears wrong to him, and if, despite the civil servant's remonstrances, the authority insist on the order. Without this moral discipline and self-denial, in the highest sense, the whole apparatus will fall apart." In exchange for the reasonable security of tenure provided for the civil servants, Ministers whom you serve must be able to rely on receiving informed and impartial advice before reaching policy decisions.

Once policy decisions are taken, they should be carried out with loyalty, speed and efficiency.

You must serve the government of the day in a dedicated and loyal manner, implementing the policies and programmes of the government, irrespective of your personal preferences and judgements. This tradition has provided stability to this country. It is of the first importance that senior civil servants conduct yourselves in such a way as to deserve and retain the confidence of the government, and to be able to establish the same relationship with whom you may be required to serve with any Minister of the government.

3. It cannot be denied that only disciplined civil servants can deliver efficient and quality services.

Discipline is not only obedience to rules and regulations but also include the training of oneself to control one's habits, actions and desires. It is also a commitment to the job and to learn, develop and improve knowledge and skills in the quest for continuous betterment. I personally find that the task of having to mete out punishment to a fellow member of the civil service a difficult one.

Nevertheless, it is a responsibility that need to be carried out in order to maintain the efficiency and integrity of the civil service. Management must assume responsibility for disciplining wrongdoers.

For that matter, failure to discipline will set a poor example for the others in the department and can even induce them to be undisciplined or to act unethically. Discipline will result from good leadership at all levels of the department and the judicious enforcement of penalties for infractions.

Character does not reach its best until it is controlled, harnessed and disciplined.

4. The Government delegates a lot of powers to the civil service. The legitimacy of the delegated powers to the civil service, is premised on several important conditions, some of which are as follows: (i) that civil servants should act in accordance with the basic principles which uphold the authority of the constitutionally elected Government; (ii) that civil servants should perform according to the constitutional and legal directives pertaining to their areas of authority; (iii) that civil servants are sworn to remain

continually accountable in an honest and accurate manner for their actions to the relevant authorities; (iv) that civil servants should act in a competent and effective manner to achieve set purposes and produce desired results; and (v) that civil servants are to use public funds entrusted to them for authorised public purposes, not for their own gain or the private gain of others. What all these conditions mean is that, civil servants should serve the will of the people as articulated through the authority of the executive and the legislature. Policy matters and decisions thereof should rest ultimately with the elected representatives of the people, and all decisions made by civil servants must be within the parameters of defined mandates and delegated authority.

5. The Oxford English Dictionary defines ethics as the science of morals or moral principles. The word itself is defined as concerned with goodness or badness of character or disposition, or with the distinction between right and wrong. These three aspects, namely values, norms and ethics when combined will be known as culture. Culture commonly refers to good manners is a reflection of the character and education of a person. Culture is the total behaviour of a person, born out of the value system practised. Culture is understood to imply learning and knowledge acquired for the sake of right living. It is a concept of what a person should know, be and do to perfect the art of living.

As Aristotle said: "We are known by what we do repeatedly. Excellence is not an act; it is a habit". To my mind, the crux of the matter of values and ethics in the civil service is for civil servants to cultivate good habits and practices during their career. Saidina Umar Al-Khattab once wrote as follows: "Let there be no doubt about it that efficiency depends on not postponing today's work until tomorrow. If you do that it will create confusion in work. You will mix priorities and nothing will be accomplished; shun as much as you can from worldly love and lust and imbibe deep-seated interest in the affairs of the masses. Give them audience for justice, even if it be for one hour daily." You should strive to complete the day's work within the same day because the next day brings fresh work.

Those of you who are in positions of authority to decide and to recommend should not waste time or procrastinate especially where it involves decision-making concerned with national development. The time which is available to a person in a day can be divided into three parts: one-third for work, one-third for sleep and recreation and one-third for religious, family and social obligations. If you are able keep to these schedules consciously and precisely, you will be able to improve work productivity in your respective department.

Discipline and obedience should be given importance in work ethics. The first and most important theme that I always emphasise is the importance of discipline and obedience, the importance of doing the 'right' thing even if it is unpopular or hard.

As senior officers and as heads in your respective departments or sections, you must have the attitude of giving topmost recognition to the compliance of procedures, rules and regulations. Order, predictability, efficiency and equality of treatment all require some kind of established procedures in conducting public business. They can remove the administration from dependence upon the changing whims of administrators; they are to buttress against favouritism and the working out of personal biases.

6. Islam has forbidden the exploitation of one's office and taking undue advantage from it. Adi bin `Umair narrates that he has heard the Prophet as saying: "whomsoever we have given some posts and he has concealed a needle or a thing smaller than that, then it will be a misappropriated thing with which he will have to appear on the Day of Judgement".

In Islam, leadership is not a position of profit but a trust (amanah).

Umar Al Khattab asserted and I quote: An Islamic leader must possess the following four attributes: Gentle but not weak; firm but not proud; economical but not stingy and will always forgive. If any of these is missing, all the other three attributes no longer hold." He also said that: The worst leaders are those whose mistakes cause hardship to their people.

7. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'reputation' as 'what is generally said or believed about a

person's character or standing' and 'the state of being well thought of; distinction; respectability'. All officers should strive towards acquiring a good reputation all round, with their superiors, peers, juniors and the community at large. In the long run reputation can only be based on the provision of quality services. Your reputation for quality work, efficient and effective service must be predictable and consistent. News about officers with bad reputation will spread more quickly. Officers with good reputation will have a competitive advantage over your peers.

8. Negara kita masih memerlukan pegawai-pegawai PTD yang cekap dan berkesan untuk mengendalikan urusan kepegawaian dan kewangan. Pegawai-pegawai tinggi PTD membantu Kerajaan dari segi pembentukan dasar dan pelaksanaan projek-projek Kerajaan.

Banyak negara-negara yang sedang membangun dan juga negara-negara Commonwealth yang telah maju telah mengubah struktur pengurusan peringkat atasan mereka dengan melantik ketua-ketua pengurus atas dasar performance contract. Kita tidak memerlukan sistem yang sedemikian oleh kerana pegawai-pegawai PTD telah berjaya mengurus jabatan-jabatan Kerajaan dengan baik. Untuk meningkatkan lagi kewibawaan pegawai-pegawai atasan PTD, saya meminta mereka supaya melaksanakan semua Pekeliling-pekeliling Kemajuan Pentadbiran Awam (PKPA) dan juga menghayati standard-standard perkhidmatan di bawah ISO 9000 yang bakal diperkenalkan itu. Pelaksanaan PKPA-PKPA dan juga ISO 9000 ini boleh meningkatkan kecekapan dan kecekapan kementerian-kementerian dan jabatan-jabatan Kerajaan, dan oleh itu menjamin kesinambungan Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik.

Saya ucapkan tahniah kepada pegawai-pegawai atasan daripada perkhidmatan-perkhidmatan yang lain yang telah memperkenalkan Quality Assurance System dan juga standard-standard dalam siri ISO 9000 di jabatan-jabatan yang berkenaan.