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KETUA SETIAUSAHA NEGARA  
Venue : Dewan Seri Baiduri, INTAN  
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Title : THE OFFICIAL OPEN CEREMONY OF THE 17TH JPA " BMCC MANAGEMENT  
DEVT PROGRAMME

Bismillahir rahmanir Rahim

Assalamualaikum and a very Good Evening

Y. Bhg. Tan Sri Ismail bin Adam  
Director-General of Public Service

Mr. Gordon Reid  
Director of Trade and Investment  
Representative of the British High Commissioner to Malaysia

Y. Bhg. Datuk Peter Wentworth  
Chairman, British-Malaysian Chamber of Commerce

BMCC Board of Directors, Distinguished guests, Course Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased and honoured to be invited to tonight's dinner, which is held in conjunction with the opening of the 17th JPA-BMCC Management Development Programme. This programme, which was previously known as the BMITA Management Training Programme, is indeed a unique one, born out of the desires of both the Malaysian government and the British private sector to contribute towards the strengthening of economic ties between the two countries.

2. The fact that this programme continues to be active for more than 20 years, since it was launched in 1983, speaks volume of its relevance and the positive contributions that it has made to the success of the Malaysia Inc policy. On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I would like to put on record our sincere gratitude to the BMCC for its commitment towards closer rapport and understanding between the British Companies and the Malaysian Civil Service.

3. The theme for this year's programme is "Service Beyond the Ordinary". This seems most appropriate in the light of greater challenges today, at improving the public service delivery system. This is also in line with our effort to inculcate a culture of excellence and extraordinary performance in the Malaysian Civil Service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. The public service of Malaysia has always regarded the private sector as a partner and an ally. It is important that the public and private sectors work together in synergy, and establish strategic alliances, in our efforts to develop the country to be more competitive and resilient. The private sector has always been regarded as the engine of growth, while the public sector is responsible for architecting the framework for major policies, as well as providing the direction for the private sector to conduct its responsibilities. The speed and efficiency with which the public sector serves the private sector determines the effectiveness of our corporations.

5. The investment climate in our country remains attractive due to a number of factors, which include among others, a strong and stable government, a good macro-economic fundamentals, and a pro-private sector government. Nevertheless, there are also areas where we need to improve quickly, if we want to retain the edge that we have built and maintained over the years. Business is not as usual any more, as our competitors are moving and improving much faster. The competitive environment in which the Malaysian economy is currently operating leaves the public service no alternative but to move to a higher

plane of efficiency; else we may lose in the race. Therefore, to remain competitive, our immediate priorities are to identify the laws, rule and procedures across the board that may hinder the effectiveness of conducting business in Malaysia.

6. In this regard, the government, through PEMUDAH, has recently unveiled major initiatives to improve the public delivery system. These include expediting the approval for registering businesses from one day to 15 minutes; approval of a company's name within a day compared to 5 days previously; corporatising a company within a day from 5 days in the past; and the earlier reimbursement of excess tax payments for the 2006 year of assessment by the Inland Revenue Board (IRB), without having to refer to previous years' assessments. And, this afternoon, the prime minister announced a package of measures to improve public service delivery, particularly with regards to services provided by the local government.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. The forging of a strong and cooperative relationship between the public and private sectors is imperative to sustain the Malaysia Inc Policy. As such, we always welcome any opportunities to forge closer relations and enhance our cooperation with the private sector. This attachment programme, I am sure, will enable the participants in particular and the civil service, in general, to be more aware and sensitive to the needs and expectations of the private sector. From the feedbacks that I receive, I understand that the private sector appreciates greater accessibility and more transparency in the public service. Hence, JPA will continue to support programmes that can strengthen and enhance cooperation between the two sectors.

8. The civil service will continue to review rules, regulations and procedures to further facilitate dealings with the private sector and the general public. This programme will enable the participants to explain and clarify the various government policies, and at the same time gather feedbacks on any problems that companies may have when dealing with the government.

9. For this year, the participants will once again have an opportunity to be attached to a subsidiary of the participating companies or its headquarters in the UK for two weeks. This attachment, I hope, will enable our officers to understudy the business operations in a different culture and society, as well as to comprehend the linkages between the Malaysian-based company and its subsidiary or parent company overseas.

10. I understand that over the years some companies have ceased to participate actively in this programme. However there are others, like the British Petroleum (BP), the British American Tobacco (BAT) and the Standard Chartered Bank, which have been consistent in their participation. To these companies, we would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation and to the newcomers, a very warm welcome. To all the 10 companies participating this year, we hope this collaboration will continue in the years to come. In response to your kind participation, we have carefully selected officers who are dedicated, diligent and committed to their cause for this programme.

11. To the twelve participants chosen to take part in the programme, I must congratulate you on your readiness to try something new, to break out of your regular routine and sacrifice your comfort zone to join this programme. I am confident you will strive to uphold the good name of the civil service and the nation whilst you are on attachment, here or overseas. As senior officials, I am confident you will not have any problems to adjust yourself in the company where you are attached. This is a golden opportunity for you to have "hands on" experience and gain exposure to the dynamics of today's business management environment. I hope you will be able to find certain concepts, techniques and norms which are contributory to the success of these companies that may be suitable for adoption in the public sector, towards enhancing the productivity and quality of our service delivery. Therefore, I strongly believe this unique programme will achieve its aims of promoting closer rapport and to act as an eye-opener both for the public and private sectors in understanding the mechanics of both organizational cultures, values and systems.

12. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Working Committee of this programme from

the Training Division of JPA and INTAN, and also the BMCC, particularly Dr. Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Majeed. To Datuk Peter Wentworth, thank you again for your support and for being present today despite your very busy schedule.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. Since its inception in 1983, the JPA-BMCC Development Management Programme has benefited more than 220 Malaysian public service officials. Thus, the formation of an alumni is very timely. An Alumni Association will represent an important part of JPA-BMCC's commitment to provide a platform for members to maintain active networking and productive collaborative alliances. It is also in line with our philosophy that an alumni would provide a forum for continuous sharing and networking among its members. I am fully aware the initial efforts towards the establishment of an alumni have started since the middle of last year involving JPA, BMCC and past participants. An output in the form of an ad-hoc JPA-BMCC pro tem committee was established in November 2006 with Y. Bhg. Datuk Ab. Khalil Ab. Hamid, the Deputy Director General (Development) of JPA as its Chairman and Dr. Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Majeed as the Deputy Chairman.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. It is now my privilege and pleasure to officially launch the establishment of the JPA-BMCC Alumni association, to be known as the Brit Mal Management Alumni or BMMA. A long-held wish of many former JPA-BMCC participants, JPA and BMCC, finally has come true! I wish the BMMA a big success in their endeavour to maintain the ties among them.

15. On that note, it is my honour to declare open the 17th JPA-BMCC Management Development Programme.

Thank you.