

By : TAN SRI MOHD. SIDEK BIN HJ. HASSAN  
KETUA SETIAUSAHA NEGARA  
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Bismillahir rahmanir rahim

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and good morning.

Y.Bhg. Dato' Seri Prof. Dr. Ibrahim bin Abu Shah, Vice Chancellor, MARA University of Technology

Y.Bhg. Dato' Dr Zulkifli Hassan  
Secretary-General  
Ministry of Higher Education

Y.Bhg. Dato'-Dato', Datin-datin  
Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to thank UiTM for inviting me here this morning, to officiate the opening of this seminar.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. I am happy to be here this morning for three reasons:

- Firstly, the audience – I see the future when I see you. Students present, to me, a portrait of enthusiastic and inquisitive minds harboured in much hope for the unknown called FUTURE and being young, you can more easily be drawn to the right values;
- Secondly, I am now in the second year of my current position, and am therefore able to step back, reflect and share with you my job and that of the 1.2 million civil servants I worked with; and how the hope that you exude plays a part for the future of the Public Service; and
- Thirdly, what lies ahead for the civil or public service and, whether we are fulfilling a 21st century government? Certainly, what we do today has got impact on our future, regardless of where we stand.

3. It is therefore the collective responsibility of my generation to set the scenes of what will be and may be for you, as well as nurture and groom you to be the leaders, drivers, movers and shakers of 21st century and beyond. The experience and knowledge we impart to you today will form but a basis of what you will build on tomorrow yourself. Your collective intellect and strength can drive and determine Malaysia's tomorrow and future. And don't doubt that for a minute!

4. What is more important however is how realistically we present to you the world view of today and provide you with the foundations and the tools to face the potential world scenarios of the future.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

WHO ARE WE CALLED THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SERVICE?

5. Allow me to spend a few minutes to share with you about the Malaysian Public Service, or the Civil Service. We are implementers of policies, often and in most cases, developed by the Government, the political masters, towards achieving the National vision and agenda. The remit or scope of the Public Service ranges from ensuring balanced social environment in terms of security, harmony, education, justice, freedom, health to economic and social development.

6. The Malaysian Public Service is divided into 28 ministries which breaks down to 720 agencies, 13 states and Federal Territories. There are 278 schemes of service. The Administrative and Diplomatic Service (ADS) or better known by its Malay acronym, PTD, is but one of them and has been often termed as the premier service. The rest include General and the State Public Services, the Joint Public Services, the Education Service, the Judiciary and the Legal Service, the Armed Forces, and the Royal Malaysia Police. All of these form the Public Service of Malaysia, which today has some 1.2 million employees.

7. The collective strength of the Public Service lies in the 1.2 million people, and in no particular class of the Service. No one post or position is better than the other in the 21st Century Public Service of Malaysia. Every component must move in concert to form a picture that can make a difference in all our lives.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

#### CHALLENGES WE FACE AS A NATION AND AS A PUBLIC SERVICE.

8. Malaysia, like all countries, faces its own set of global challenges. For Malaysia, the main challenges rise from:

- i. Greater freedom and choices for individuals moving globally. This dictates what they can have access to buy or sell, where they can move for more choices and at what price;
- ii. Access to information is breaking barriers of protection. No one country can be immune to price or patent protection indefinitely. Things are continually copied, and enhanced;
- iii. Availability of cost effective and competitive resources and labour allows for individuals and businesses to be able to operate from a few places at one time to access several markets;
- iv. Lower prices and greater availability of goods and services from different markets is eating into national competitiveness;
- v. Access to capital at lowest costs gives open ended opportunities for firms to gain access to competitive sources of materials and inputs in various places; and
- vi. Rampant and cheap transfer of technology and know-how provides the challenge of preventing today's invention, yesterday's story!

9. These are real challenges and yet you might ask what it has got to do with Public Service of Malaysia which only approves our MyKad and driver's licences, sometimes gives fines for speeding and collects taxes. Some public service offices occasionally clean the drains and collects the rubbish you may even say? So how can this institution called the Public Service affect one's life to begin with, and how do one even fit into this whole equation? My short answer "EVERYTHING".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

#### MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SERVICE – HOW IS IT RELEVANT TO YOU

10. How the Public Service is administered will determine:

- i. If the economy is vibrant enough for everyone to have a job with competitive salary;
- ii. The healthcare provided is on par with global standards;

- iii. The curriculum of education and the standards and quality of teachers and lecturers is on par with standards that will determine whether our students and their capabilities are recognised globally;
- iv. The quality of our infrastructure determines the type of investors and tourists we attract into our country;
- v. There is guaranteed peace with provision of safety and security in the country;
- vi. There is development of infrastructure in the country;
- vii. There is a fair and just judicial system that ensures laws are upheld in this country; and last but not least,
- viii. If the environment and natural resources are managed and maintained to ensure a prosperous Malaysia.

These are just a few examples of how the Public Service or how well it is run can affect your lives and the lives of all Malaysians.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

#### PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND

11. Given how the Public Service can affect our lives, we need to understand what of the Public Service is needed for tomorrow? - "Is the Malaysian Public Service able to have Malaysia participate in global economic competition?" If so what is its role? Do we have the people, the processes, the knowledge, the will, the skills and the drive to be in the same league with greater Nations?

12. For nations and indeed governments to participate successfully in global economic competition, we need to take on transformed roles such as:

- i. Be the movers and shakers for market development. Move our markets with new developments, new ideas, new inventions, new initiatives that will attract investments and expand our economy;
- ii. Be enablers of productivity and efficiency and not frustrate our customers who come from all walks of life;
- iii. Have work processes that promote a competitive market. Do we have the capacity and capability and the strength of character, even, to make the decisions to discard processes and systems that don't work anymore? Are we able to challenge the norm to better this country or do we stick with traditions and customs of what used to work?
- iv. Can we engage private sector to promote private sector expansion as both the public and private sectors rely on each other for the growth of the Nation, and

v. Do we have the skills, knowledge and infrastructure to promote human and capital resource development or are we short of skilled resources that we need to have foreign skills for all areas?

#### ROLE OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN NATIONAL CHALLENGES?

13. If domestic and international investors are to place confidence in a country's economy the government must have a public service which has the staff who will garner this confidence.

14. To achieve the Agenda of the 21st Century and beyond the Public Service of Malaysia must be able to attract the best and the brightest, people like you, to form our sustainable pool of talents who will take the Public Service and in turn Malaysia to new heights of achievements. We can achieve this by offering:

- merit-based recruitment and promotion;

- incentive-based compensation; and
- clearly defined reward-oriented career paths.

15. The Public Service of Malaysia is fast moving towards this model of recruitment and human capital development.

#### YOUR ROLES IN THE MALAYSIA OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

16. Each of you in this room will play a role in shaping the future of this country. That remains in your hands. We must dispel the notion that only the left over, the second class join the Public Service. It is important to recognize that Malaysia's Public Service has and will continue to have its share of top performers, many are not only comparable in skills and capability, but better than their peers in the private sector.

17. Their choice of career however, is based on the drive and motivation to serve for the betterment of the nation. Financial success alone is NOT the primary motivator to joining the Service. When you make these choices, serving the Nation becomes your primary motivation.

18. Malaysia is blessed with many resources and it holds enormous potential of being taken to great and greater heights. We can each choose where we stand in contributing to making Malaysia great locally and globally.

19. From where I stand today, there is much satisfaction to serving the nation, and serving it with pride and integrity. You are not only able to make a difference in the lives of people you know, but you can potentially touch the lives of the many you don't know and may never meet, in ways you would have never thought. By making the one call, or making timely payment of invoice or speeding up of a license application or serving the customer across the counter, you may have enabled someone to travel to completing their education, to getting their salary for the month, or getting a house help they may have been waiting on for months, or even to starting a new business and so on and so forth or giving someone the best medical care they never thought they could afford.

20. I urge you to rise to the calling of this career as you are some of the best brains this country is blessed to have today. You must use this knowledge and intellect in spearheading our country to greater heights. By being the Public Service for the 21st Century you will be the hands that will have Malaysia rise to the expectations and challenges of tomorrow.

21. With that and with Bismillahir rahmanir rahim it is now my pleasure to declare the Seminar on the Malaysian Diplomatic and Administrative Service officially open.

Thank you.

Wabillahittaufiq walhidayah  
Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.