

FEDERATION OF MALAYA



OFFICIAL
YEAR BOOK
1961



His Majesty

Tuanku Syed Putra ibni Al-Marhum Syed Hassan Jamalullail ascended the throne as Raja of Perlis on 4th December, 1945. Elected as Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong on 18th April, 1960, and as Yang di-Pertuan Agong on 21st September, 1960. His Majesty was installed on 4th January, 1961.

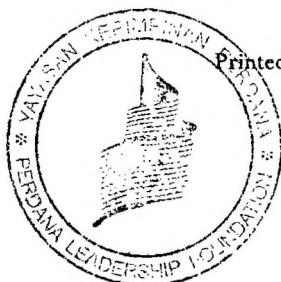
FEDERATION OF MALAYA

OFFICIAL

Year Book

VOLUME ONE

1961



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PUSTAKA PERDANA



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FOREWORD

Members of the public are asked to accept this first edition of the Federation of Malaya Year Book with all due reserve. Although the material on which it is based came originally from authoritative sources it has not been possible within the time available to clear the re-written text with all concerned. For that reason, there will inevitably be a number of lacunae, errors and inconsistencies in this edition; in future editions, these will be corrected and a number of chapters re-written altogether. Readers are accordingly requested to note the limited disclaimer by the Minister of the Interior on pages 1 and 2.

Local terms have, wherever possible, been translated into English. This is for the convenience of readers abroad. For instance, the terms “Merdeka”, “Merdeka Day” are widely used and understood in Malaya for “Independence” and “Independence Day”, but in this text the latter have invariably been used.

In compiling a completely new work of this nature, it was thought prudent to follow a well-established model. The one chosen was the official British Handbook*. There were two principal reasons for this choice: firstly, the British Handbook is recognised as one of the most complete national surveys in the world today; and secondly, many of our political, legal and governmental institutions have been adopted or adapted from practices evolved over the centuries in the United Kingdom. Students of political economy would be well advised to read the present work in conjunction with the British Handbook as the latter throws considerable light on the origins of those practices in the United Kingdom which have been borrowed by the Federation of Malaya.

Although the general copyright of this volume is reserved to the Government of the Federation of Malaya, matter contained herein may be quoted freely with or without acknowledgment.

It is once again emphasised that the contents of this volume are not exhaustive; future editions should show a progressive improvement as experience founded on criticism accumulates.

* *Britain—An Official Handbook* (Reference Division, Central Office of Information London; published annually in the Autumn by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London).



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ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA

Page 88, lines 1 and 2—

Omit the words “and Canada”.

Pages 93 and 94—

Since the note on the legal profession was written, both the Federation and the Singapore Governments have accepted the University of Malaya law degree as a basic qualification to enter the profession. It should be noted that Commonwealth lawyers who qualify outside the United Kingdom do not qualify for admission to the Malayan Bar unless they hold a practising certificate issued under the Colonial Solicitors Act of 1900 or the Solicitors Act of 1932.

Page 122—

The Federal Capital Act referred to in the third paragraph came into force on 1st April, 1961, and the former Municipal Council has thus ceased to exist.

Page 152, line 15—

Figures will be found at Table 42 on page 477.

Page 158, footnote—

For Chapter XI read Chapter XII (page 307).

FURTHER CORRIGENDA

Plate opposite page 49—

His late Majesty died on 1st September, 1960.

Page 87 line 14—

the year should read 1957.

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INTRODUCTION

BY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

I should like to write a few words by way of introduction to this Official Year Book, which is the first of a new series.

Before Independence, the then High Commissioner of the Federation of Malaya was required by the Royal Instructions annually to submit to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London an account of his stewardship over the preceding year. These were known as the Annual Reports. The last one appeared in 1958 after Independence and related to 1957, the last year in which the Secretary of State was answerable to the United Kingdom Parliament for the good administration of the Federation. With Independence, the need for these Reports naturally ceased.

In 1958 and 1959, the Cabinet considered the desirability of continuing an annual publication in some form or other, but lack of editorial staff precluded any action being taken. Towards the end of 1959, it was agreed that a progress report was unsatisfactory: a progress report always pre-assumes that the reader is conversant with the general working of a system or the laws governing it. In consequence, the Cabinet decided that the old reports should be replaced by an annual work of reference which would pre-assume nothing: emphasis would be placed, not so much on what had been accomplished or otherwise during twelve calendar months, as on what the nation was trying to do, what it was doing and how it did it. This information in time will cover the entire range of national activity, embracing government, public utilities, the economy, trade and industry, health, social services, sport and so on. As each Year Book is published, it will contain up-to-date figures and fact; it will increasingly become a mirror reflecting the Malayan way of life and any changes which may from time to time affect it.

That in itself is no small undertaking, but a start must obviously be made sooner or later. This, then, is the first attempt, and is Volume I of the new series. A better title perhaps would be "Experimental Volume". I mention this because material—and material never before collated in one book—has had to be collected from a considerable number of sources. Once this material was in the hands of the General Editor, an enormous quantity of re-writing was necessary for stylistic uniformity and to redistribute information throughout the entire text. We had hoped to go to press early in the second half of 1960 and publish before the end of the year, but the volume of editorial work involved unfortunately made this impossible. In order to publish at all, much of the re-writing has inevitably not been checked with

all the original sources, and it is certain that errors, omissions, overstatements and understatements will be detected in this first attempt. For that reason I must issue a qualified disclaimer: whilst I *believe* that everything in this volume is substantially accurate, I cannot *guarantee* that it is; fact and opinion are sometimes hard to separate, particularly when so much historical or background information has had to be written and condensed to complete the picture in any particular field of activity. I therefore hope that readers will appreciate that the contents of this volume must not be regarded as a firm expression of the views or policy of the Government, or of any section of the Government.

I hope that the Year Book for 1962 will be published in early January of 1962. Any errors or omissions in this “Experimental Volume” should by that time have come to light and been corrected. I would welcome constructive criticism from members of the public, and will ensure that all such comments are considered. A handy and up-to-date reference book will, I am convinced, be welcomed not only by the people of the Federation but also by our friends in other parts of the world.

Lastly, I should like to thank the many anonymous Government Officers who have made the present volume possible. In particular, I would express my gratitude to Mr. Norman Siebel of the *Straits Times* for so generously contributing the bulk of the material around which was written in chapter on Sport—an activity which is so popular here in Malaya.

Ministry of the Interior, Suleiman bin Dato’ Abdul Rahman,

Kuala Lumpur,

1st December, 1960

Minister of the Interior

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION TO MALAYA

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION

The Federation of Malaya covers the southernmost portion of the Kra Peninsula in South-East Asia, which protrudes from the Asian land mass between India and China. The Federation itself can best be described as a rough ellipse whose axis runs south west between 1° and $6\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ North, a distance of some 450 miles. Longitude 102° East runs approximately through the geographical centre. The east coast is bordered by the South China Sea, the west coast by the Straits of Malacca the maximum distance across, at the bulge of the ellipse, is rather less than 200 miles. A common land frontier is shared to the north with Thailand; the southern tip of the peninsula is joined by a causeway to the Island State of Singapore. The coastline extends to some 1,200 miles.

The country covers some 51,000 square miles, which makes it about the same size as England or Greece, about twice that of Ceylon, but barely one-fifth the size of Texas. Four-fifths of the land is covered with dense tropical rain-jungle, much of which occurs on mountainous terrain. The settled and cultivated areas lie along the two coastal strips, in two areas to the north, and on the bottom of the river-valleys which flow from the mountains to the seas. The mountains themselves are relatively unspectacular from a purely scenic point of view, the highest (Gunong Tahan) being some 7,000 feet; at times they can however be objects of great beauty, particularly in the early morning or late evening when they are lighted by the low-slanting rays of the sun.

It would be very nearly true to say that the mountain formation is akin to that of Italy, with a central spine running from north to south. There is a slightly smaller range which runs east of and parallel to the main range which encloses two of the main rivers—the Kelantan River flowing north, and the Pahang River flowing generally south and then east. The third main river, which is on the west coast, is the Perak River which also starts in the main range. In their early stages, these rivers form cataracts through picturesque gorges, but as the coastal plains are approached the flow of water becomes less rapid, and then sluggish when the slightly tidal zone is reached near their mouths.

The two coastlines are in appearance and atmosphere totally different. By and large, the west coast is fringed by mangrove swamp with all its muddy monotony: there are comparatively few sandy beaches suitable for

bathing. On the east coast, the scenery completely changes, and the visitor will see sweeping, scalloping beaches of gold or silver sand, complete with rocky jungle-covered headlands, which conform to the normal conception of a south-sea island. The palm and casuarina trees growing around the fishing *kampongs* present an attractive and peaceful picture. Further inland, on both coasts, comes the agricultural belt containing as it does the vast blocks of rubber and oil-palm estates and smallholdings which are and for so long have been the mainstay of the country's economy and undoubted wealth. It is in these areas that the communications of the country principally lie. Throughout the peninsula cultivation of padi is prominent, particularly to the north on both sides of the main range. In the two central west-coast states of Perak and Selangor a fair proportion of the land is devoted to surface tin-mining—another main industry—and the traveller will be torn between regret at the devastation of agricultural land caused by this essential industry and the beauty he is forced to admire under changing light conditions.

Off the coast lie a number of islands. Pulau Langkawi and Pangkor on the west are easily accessible and are very similar to the east coast with their clear water and excellent bathing facilities. Penang Island likewise has good bathing facilities and the added attraction that George Town—a free port and the second city of the Federation—has much to offer. The general scene as viewed from the top of Penang Hill (which is reached by cable railway) explains why this island has come to be known as “the Pearl of the Orient”. On the east coast are a number of extremely beautiful islands, the largest being Tioman which lies some 25 miles off the Pahang-Johore boundary. A smaller group in Trengganu—the Perhentian Islands—lies closer to the shore.

Those who wish occasionally to escape from the humidity of the coastal plains may do so by going to one of the four hill stations, the principal of which is Cameron Highlands (4,750 feet) in Perak. More easily accessible from the Federal Capital is Fraser's Hill (3,400). Penang Hill has already been described. Lastly, there is Maxwell's Hill in Perak overlooking Taiping and the Larut plain. The first two are spacious plateaux where facilities for golf and other sports are available; Penang and Maxwell's Hill are perched on very steep escarpments, but what they lose in space for sporting activities is amply compensated by the vast panorama which can be viewed from them.

CLIMATE

The characteristic features of the climate of Malaya are uniform temperature, high humidity, and copious rainfall, and they arise mainly from the maritime exposure of the Peninsula. By uniform temperature is meant the lack of serious temperature variation throughout the year, and the excessive

temperatures found in continental tropical areas are never experienced. The nights are relatively cool, and although the days can be hot and somewhat oppressive on account of the high humidity, it rarely happens that refreshing sleep is not obtained.

Seasons

There are no distinct seasons in sense understood in temperate latitude regions. There are four seasons that can be distinguished, namely the North East Monsoon from October to February, the South West Monsoon from mid May to September, and two inter-monsoonal seasons corresponding with the equinoctial seasons. The beginning and end of the Monsoons are usually not well defined, although the onset of the North East Monsoon is fairly definite. The rainfall and prevailing winds are largely governed by this seasonal division.

Temperature

The differences in temperature in Malaya are comparatively small, whether the variations are considered throughout the year at one place, or from place to place at the same time of the year. They are nevertheless fairly definite in some respects, and are worthy of mention. The average day temperature in the districts east of the Main Range is lower than in otherwise similar districts west of the Range. The differences in average values in the east and west are almost entirely due to the low day temperatures experienced in the eastern districts during the North East Monsoon. At Kuala Trengganu, for example, the day temperature rarely reaches 90°F. during the North East Monsoons and often fails to reach 80°F. A number of occasions have been recorded on which the temperature did not rise above 75°F. which is not infrequently the lowest temperature reached during the night in most districts.

Night temperatures do not vary to the same extent, the average usually being between 70°F. and 75°F. Individual values fall much below this at nearly all stations, the coolest nights commonly following the hottest days. The lowest temperature recorded in the plains is 58°F.

At hill stations uniformity of temperature is still found, but the temperature itself is naturally lower. Average temperature in these areas is 68°F. The highest temperature on record at Fraser's Hill (4,200 feet) is 82°F. and the coolest nights on record at Tanah Rata, Cameron Highlands (4,750 feet) is 36°F.

Rainfall

The yearly rainfall over Malaya is high, and considering the Peninsula as a whole, the heaviest rainfall is experienced along the East Coast where the

average is about 120 inches. This average is maintained for a few miles inland and then begins to decrease further inland to about 100 inches at the foot of the Main Range.

Between the Main Range and the West Coast, the distribution is more irregular. In North Kedah, the rainfall continues to decrease as the West Coast is approached but in South Kedah and Perak, there is a notable increase in the rainfall before the coast is reached. Along the West Coast the rainfall decreases fairly uniformly from 107 inches at Penang to 80-85 inches on the coasts of Selangor. The eastern part of Negri Sembilan is comparatively dry with an average rainfall of 70 inches.

The highest rainfall recorded occurs in the Larut Hills near Taiping where the average is 232 inches, and the driest station is at Jelebu with an average of 65 inches. Taiping itself at the foot of the hills, has the highest rainfall of the low level stations with an average of 166 inches. The rainfall in this area is exceptional and at other hill stations at approximately the same height, but situated in the Main Range of the mountains, the rainfall is considerably less; the average at Fraser's Hill being 106 inches and at Cameron Highlands 104 inches.

Winds

Except during the North East Monsoon, the surface winds are generally light, but between April and November, squalls known as "Sumatras" occur in the Straits of Malacca. These squalls usually occur at night and early morning, and are often accompanied by thunder and rain.

NATURAL VEGETATION

The natural vegetation of Malaya is essentially tropical forest, or jungle as it is commonly called, which varies in composition and structure depending on the elevation of the land above sea-level and the nature of the habitat; but visitors travelling by road (particularly through the Western States) and passing through rubber estates, rice fields and countryside scarred by tin mining may be surprised to learn that over seventy per cent of the country is still under forest, for their view of this will be mainly restricted to distant forest-clad hills. They may be struck by the restrained blue-green colour of this forest, since the colour of the whole countryside, apart from the rice fields, is in sharp contrast to the pastel yellow-green to which they are probably accustomed if they come from temperate climates.

There are mangrove forests on the mud in the estuaries of the main rivers, and particularly along the sheltered west coast. These forests, which are flooded with the rising tides, are unusual for tropical vegetation in the very few species found; and they are interesting in the various adaptations such

as the erect asparagus-like breathing roots which many of the plants have adopted as a result of living in such conditions.

In contrast to the west coast there is along the east coast an almost continuous sandy beach fringed by slender, whispery *Casuarina* trees except where they have been replaced with coconuts by man, and which is so typical of most people's conception of tropical shores.

Behind the coast there are extensive areas of swamp forest; much of this is deep peat forest, in which the roots of the trees combine to form little more than a relatively hard crust over a coffee-coloured watery layer containing preserved timber and other plant remains. In these swamps rattans and stemless palms abound, many of them extremely thorny.

The lowland dryland forests which predominate in Malaya are characterised by the size of the trees, the largest being some 150 feet or more in height and 10 feet in circumference with long, very cylindrical stems and massive crowns at the top. A feature of these forests, in fact of the lowland forests of south-east Asia in general, is the predominance of trees of the family *Dipterocarpaceae*, which includes most of the important commercial timber species; and to visitors from temperate countries the presence of many giant leguminous trees will probably cause amazement. Thick woody lianes and creepers are frequent, but not nearly as common as is generally thought; and owing to the dense overhead canopy which maintains comparative gloom in the lower regions of the forest, the undergrowth layer is nowhere as dense as popularly imagined and movement is comparatively easy. Given increased light, however, by naturally falling trees and man-made clearings for roads or cultivation, the undergrowth of the jungle edge quickly becomes extremely thick and dense. It is this fringe that so few people persevere in breaking through to the forest beyond which is responsible for the popular misconception of the impenetrability of tropical jungle.

From Kuala Lumpur northwards on both sides of the main range and particularly in the extreme north-west, the monotonous beauty of the countryside is periodically broken by the appearance of limestone hills with cliff faces of bare white rock or clothed by dwarf and often scrubby vegetation. This is particularly striking near Ipoh. The foothills of the main range are also periodically broken by the presence of quartz ridges which have characteristic mountain-type flora, including a pretty small-flowered red rhododendron. Near Kuala Lumpur there occur the limestone hills of Batu Caves and Bukit Takun (Templer Park) and the impressive quartz wall of Klang Gates which has been utilised as a dam to the new water reservoir for the town.

The vegetation of the hills changes with increase in elevation, both in species and in height, and at about 5,000 feet in the hill stations and on the mountain tops trees are often no more than 60 to 70 feet tall, while on sharp

ridges, isolated mountain tops and at still higher elevations they are often gnarled and no higher than ten feet or so. In these forests oaks are frequent, parasites are a feature, and the boles of trees and the forest floor are covered with ferns and mosses. The term “dwarf mossy forest” is frequently used for the high mountain forest and is particularly apt. Where the vegetation has been disturbed and there is abundant light, tree ferns are common. Rhododendrons are often associated with high mountains, and several species with red, yellow or white flowers are present as shrubs and small trees in the mountains of Malaya.

Bright flowers occur but they are usually rather small and their brilliance is less striking than most people anticipate, as they are frequently lost in the mass of green foliage of other plants or in the tall crowns of the trees. Many plants, however, have brightly coloured new leaves and (though very few are truly deciduous) a flush of red coloured leaves, as occurs every year in the hills with Perak (*Elateriospermum tapos*), is in itself an attractive sight. The pale blue-grey cauliflower-like crowns of Seraya (*Shorea curtisii*), which emphasise the ridges of the low hills, also break the otherwise verdant monotony.

Tropical forests are extremely rich in species, and those of Malaya (apart from the mangroves) are no exception. It is estimated that there are some 8,000 species of flowering plants of which at least 2,500 are trees, and it is not uncommon to find more than a hundred species of tree on a single acre.

Whenever any forested area is cleared the ground is very quickly covered with new growth of a different character from the original cover. Continuous destruction and burning of the regrowth results eventually in grass land; these are hot and inhospitable tracts of land with coarse lallang (*Imperata* grass) three to four feet high. However, they can be very attractive in full flower with their white inflorescences waving in the breeze like those of wheat or barley in a temperate climate. A common wayside shrub with large pinkish-mauve flowers with which the visitor will soon become acquainted is called the Singapore rhododendron, though it is not related in any way to the rhododendron family. It is particularly common in old waste land and will invade lallang which has remained unburnt for a few years.

In the towns, avenues of large Rain Trees (*Enterolobium saman*) clothed with abundant parasites, and Senas (*Pterocarpus indicus*) are a feature. Flamboyants (*Delonix regia*) and Yellow-flames (*Peltophorum ferrugineum*) are fairly common. In the roadside villages the small West Indian Cherry (*Muntingia calabura*), though not a true edible cherry in any sense, is frequently planted owing to its rapid growth. In the rural areas there are often groves of fruit trees—the well-known Durian (*Durio zibethinus*) which has a large, greeny-bronze and spiny fruit whose taste and odour so defeats description that some have likened it to strawberries-and-cream,

others to garlic or even coal gas; the Rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*) whose fruit hangs in red, hairy clusters; the Mangosteen (*Garcinia Mangostina*) with its compact dark green crown; these and many others make even the scattered villages a cool and shady forest in miniature.

The vegetation of Malaya is in fact most interesting, but undoubtedly one mainly of trees and forests which remain a maze even to many Malaysians. It is really only in the hills that flowering herbs and orchids are readily met with, and it is there the visitor from colder climes will probably begin to feel that he is on familiar ground.

WILD LIFE

The jungles of Malaya abound with an enormous variety of wild life. This may surprise a visitor travelling by road or rail, as he will see comparatively little apart from birds and, occasionally, members of the monkey family. The reason for this apparent lack of wild life lies in the nature of the Malayan terrain—the density of the undergrowth along the jungle fringes provides an effective screen to conceal the wild animals, most of which are shy by nature and avoid the populated areas.

Carnivores

The tiger must obviously take pride of place amongst all animals, being the national animal of the Federation (whose armorial bearings are supported by two such animals). They are fairly plentiful, although seldom seen, and constitute little serious threat to life or limb unless wounded or very decrepit. This applies to all big game: a wild animal normally only attacks a human being when cornered and frightened, or when it is unable to forage for its food owing to age or injury. Panther and leopard are occasionally encountered; a sub-species of the latter—the clouded leopard—is a particularly beautiful animal with spots and stripes merging into blotches, but it is so timid that it seldom appears in opened-up areas. Other members of the cat tribe, such as civets (*Musang*) have fewer inhibitions and can often be found at the edge of villages or cultivation. The same applies to the Malayan wild dog.

Omnivores

Principal of the omnivores is the honey-bear, which is found in most of the world's zoos. Classified as big game, he can only be hunted under licence. The honey-bear seldom grows above about four feet in height, and is distinguished by a medium-length black coat with a white star. They express their contentment in captivity, particularly after meals, by a curious purring noise not altogether unlike an electric refrigerator.

"... THE FREEDOM TO WHICH WE ASPIRE
IS THE FREEDOM TO GOVERN OURSELVES
UNDER A SYSTEM IN WHICH
PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS SHALL
BE EXCLUSIVELY REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE PEOPLE'S WILL"

*Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya,
when presenting the Federal Constitution to Parliament.*

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