

Speech by Y.A.B. Ketua Menteri at the International
Cooperative Day Celebration, 1976 in the State of
Penang to be held at the M.G.S. Hall, Logan Road, on
Saturday, 17th July, 1976 at 2.30 p.m.

The Chairman and Members of the Organising Committee,
The Director of Cooperative Development, Penang,
Cooperators in the State of Penang,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies & Gentlemen:

I wish to thank the Committee of the International Co-
operative Day Celebration for 1976 in Penang for so kindly inviting
me to officiate at this celebration.

2. International Cooperative Day is celebrated by more than
320 million members in over 60 countries throughout the world. In
Malaysia, Cooperative Day is celebrated simultaneously at national,
state and, in certain places, district level. This is commendable
because it makes the public aware of the role which the Cooperative
Movement can play in building up the economy and solidarity amongst
the people.

3. Since Independence, the Cooperative Movement has always enjoyed the support of the Government because we are confident that cooperatives have an effective role in economic development, especially in our efforts to eradicate poverty and to restructure society as embodied in the New Economic Policy.

4. I understand that the Cooperative Movement is striving to adapt itself to efforts in economic development to ensure increasing effectiveness. This is evident in the formation of two new organisations viz. Lembaga Pertubuhan Peladang and MAJU IKAN which are aimed at promoting farmers' and fishermen's cooperatives. To ensure the successful development of cooperatives in general, a new concept was introduced namely, to consolidate small cooperatives whether agricultural, fishery and so on, to form a big cooperative according to the needs of a locality, area or district.

5. The consolidation of small cooperatives into a bigger one can ensure the success of the organisation because, upon its

formation, three important aspects come into play viz. increased membership, bigger capital and efficient, sincere and trained management. Such a cooperative will be able to work towards achieving our objectives to raise the social and economic standards of our people. It will be capable of carrying on such functions and activities as commerce, industry, housing, land development, transport, bank management, credit and so on.

6. I am told that, in our State, the most popular form of cooperative is that of Thrift and Loan. In 1975, there were 30 such cooperatives, lending out a total loan of \$16 million from an accumulated capital of \$18 million. This represents roughly 90% of the capital holding of the Cooperatives in our country. The time is now ripe for cooperatives to focus their attention on investment in development projects e.g. trade and industry and in particular housing, which will yield lucrative profits and will serve the interests of the cooperatives and its members more in the long run.

7. Even so, it is heartening to note that, with the existence of no less than 10 cooperatives in the State, each co-operative has capital assets exceeding \$1 million, which places each one of them in the millionaire category. To these cooperatives, I urge them to further intensify their activities by generating areas of economic development in the State.

8. I feel that efforts should be made to establish more cooperatives amongst students in secondary schools. At present, there are 18 such cooperatives. Students Cooperatives or School Cooperatives will be able to inculcate in the student members an awareness of such cooperative concept as thrift, cooperation, self-reliance and democracy. Such a training will contribute towards making them into self-reliant citizens when they grow up. Besides, such cooperatives can orientate the thinking of the students towards business and commerce so that they will not all channel their ambitions solely to enter the Government service.

9. I am confident that the Cooperative Movement in the State will be able to contribute towards improving the social and economic conditions of the people based on the cooperative principles and concept, to create a united, fair and equitable, progressive and self-reliant society. This is in line with the concept of the New Economic Policy and National Development. I hope that you will all on this auspicious day reaffirm your faith in the Cooperative Movement and endeavour to do your best to expand your activities to bring the benefits of mutual self-help to all your members.

10. I now have great pleasure in declaring open International Cooperative Day for 1976 in the State of Penang.