

Speech by the Honourable the Chief Minister, Penang, at
the Laying of the Foundation Stone Ceremony of the
St. John Ambulance of Malaysia, State of Penang, Head-
quarters Building at Grove Road, Penang, on Saturday,
16th October, 1976 at 4.30 p.m.

The State President, The State Commissioner, Officers and Members
of the St. John Ambulance of Malaysia, State of Penang,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies & Gentlemen:

I am greatly privileged to be invited by the Officers
and Members of the St. John Ambulance of Malaysia, State of
Penang, to attend this auspicious occasion of the Laying of the
Foundation Stone Ceremony of your new headquarters building.

I thank your State President for his kind invitation to me to
officiate at this function.

2. The St. John Ambulance was first established in
Penang in 1939. Since then, as a responsible voluntary ser-
vice organisation, the St. John Ambulance Association in the
State of Penang has established a tradition of service to the

community which is valuable and immensely appreciated both by the State Government and our people.

3. Today, with the rapid pace of socio-economic development taking place in Malaysia as a whole and in Penang in particular, voluntary service organisations like the St. John Ambulance will have to assume an increasingly important role in the service of our fellowmen. It is therefore heartening to learn that your membership today has increased to nearly 4,000 strong, both in the Ambulance, the Nursing and the Cadets Sectors. This speaks well of the enthusiasm and civic-consciousness of the leaders of your organisation to cater for the needs of our society.

4. I **understand** that your headquarters project was envisaged as long ago as 1968. I am happy that you have successfully realised your objective of having your own building to cater for the needs of your members and to provide proper and

adequate facilities for training, social and recreational activities for them. I commend your fine efforts in carrying out projects to raise funds for the construction of your headquarters. That you have managed to collect sufficient funds to carry out the First Phase of your project costing about \$170,000/- clearly indicates your determination and your spirit of self-reliance to realise your objective.

5. The State Government fully appreciates the fine work that your officers and members are doing in the service of the community. In alienating this piece of State land to the St. John Ambulance Association, the Government has assisted you to have a headquarters building which you can be proud of. This building will enable you to carry out your functions and activities in a proper and congenial atmosphere.

6. I understand that the First Phase of your three-storey building will provide for the ground floor to accommodate your

administrative section and a hall for the training of your personnel and that this will be ready early next year. It is hoped that the Second Phase of your building which will provide for dormitories and other facilities will be carried out as soon as funds are available.

7. This foundation stone ceremony will, I hope, spur the development of your project. As can be seen by all of us, the building is already taking shape and the four walls are already in the course of completion. Certainly, this is a clear indication of the enthusiasm and initiative of your President as Chairman and Members of the Building Committee to get things going rapidly and to provide the hall for your training as soon as possible.

8. I congratulate all of you for your efforts and your keen interest to carry on the high traditions of the St. John Ambulance to serve our fellowmen and the community. I take

this opportunity to pay a tribute to your public-spiritedness and your zeal in contributing towards nation-building and the welfare of the citizens of the State of Penang.

9. I am happy to say that your officers and members have given their cooperation and full support of the Government's efforts to nurture the spirit of goodwill and understanding among our people in accordance with the tenets of the Rukunegara. I hope that you will all involve yourselves fully in your role as citizens to ensure the peace, progress and security of our State and of Malaysia as a whole. It is our duty as loyal citizens of Malaysia to strengthen our resolution to work for the national interest in the true spirit of brother and sister Malaysians sharing a common destiny so that we can all look forward to a greater measure of happiness for our people as a whole.

10. Once again, I thank your President, Officers and Members of your organisation for the valuable contributions you have made to society and your cooperation with the State Government. On my part, I take this opportunity to congratulate you all on your smart bearing at public rallies and sports meets, and your preparedness to serve the community and to cope with any emergency gives a measure of comfort and assurance to our people that we can rely on the St. John Ambulance in the performance of their duties.

11. I wish all of you every success in your activities and in your endeavours to raise funds for the completion of your headquarters project. I am confident that the public of Penang will come forward and donate generously to this worthy cause.

12. I now take great pleasure in laying the Foundation Stone of the new building of the St. John Ambulance Headquarters, State of Penang.

Thank you.