

SPEECH BY YANG AMAT BERTHORMAT KETUA MENTERI,
PULAU PINANG, DR. LIM CHONG EU, AT THE OFFICIAL
OPENING OF THE NEW TOWNSHIP OF SEBERANG JAYA
ON 11TH OCTOBER, 1976, BY YANG AMAT BERTHORMAT
DATUK HUSSEIN ONN, PERDANA MENTERI,
MALAYSIA

Yang Amat Berhormat, Perdana Menteri,
Malaysia, Datuk Hussein Onn,

Yang Berbahagia Datin Suhaila,

Honourable Members,

Honourable Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the State Government of Penang, I
welcome all of you to the official opening of the new
Township in Seberang Perai

2. We are indeed honoured by the gracious presence
of Yang Amat Berhormat, Perdana Menteri Malaysia,
Datuk Hussein Onn, and Yang Berbahagia Datin Suhaila on
this occasion. The presence of Yang Amat Berhormat
Perdana Menteri to officiate at the launching of the new

Township clearly reflects his deep interest in the socio-economic development of the Nation in general and the welfare of the people in Penang in particular, which marks the importance of this occasion.

3. The planning of this new Township began in 1970. Today we are witnessing the launching of the new Township in an area which was once a swamp and an old rubber estate. I am confident that during the period of the Third Malaysia Plan, even greater development will take place in this Township.

4. The development of this new Township reflects the determination of the Government to implement a programme of development for the benefit of the people in every part

of the State, whether on the Island or in Seberang Perai. The particular emphasis on this programme of development, as evidenced by this new Township in Seberang Perai, is "rural industrialisation and rural urbanisation". The programme of rural industrialisation is an important component of the State's overall strategy for properly planned and controlled socio-economic development.

5. The decision to emphasise upon the development of the industrial sector is based upon our determination to revitalise the stagnant economy of the State in the 1960s. When the Government took stock of the resources and the economic pattern of the State it was found that the traditional commercial and the agricultural sectors of the State's economy would not be able to sustain the pace of progress required by the people. It was then decided that rural industrialisation should spearhead the revitalisation of the State's economy to create more jobs

for the people as well as to restructure society. This is in accord with the objectives of the New Economic Policy.

6. By 1969, the total number of jobs created within the industrial areas in the State was only 2,400. Since then we have made great progress in the industrial sector - in the area around this new Township which till today has been referred to as the Prai and Bagan Serai Industrial areas.

7. Today we have a total of 82 factories in operation in the State's Industrial areas in Seberang Perai. These factories cover an area of 572.97 acres and provide direct employment to 15,900 persons. It has been estimated that the existing factories have a further potential to provide employment up to a total of 25,600 persons when they

are fully operational. Apart from this, there are at present 10 factories under construction, covering an area of 27.28 acres with a potential employment for a further 2,000 workers. It has also been estimated that the direct salaries of these new workers amount to M\$36 million per year.

8. It can therefore be seen that the strategy of rural industrialisation has successfully achieved the objective of creating more job opportunities for the people in the State and of improving their livelihood. However, as the State Government promoted rural industrialisation, it also planned to complement this effort with a programme of rural urbanisation.

9. With the establishment of the new growth centres, such as this new Township in the hitherto rural areas, rural urban imbalances can be reduced. The development of this Township was initiated to provide the new workers

with proper housing and urban facilities. It was also envisaged that such development would check rural-urban migration. It is a well-established fact that uncontrolled rural urban drift tends to create slums, unemployment stress and dislocation of the established ways of life in the urban areas. It was therefore necessary that we must prevent these socio-economic problems from developing, otherwise it would be very costly to remedy them at a later time.

10. The process of rural industrialisation also integrates workers drawn from the urban and rural areas as well as from different ethnic origins. This promotes greater intermingling and understanding amongst our people. The objectives of restructuring society through redressing economic imbalances insist upon a careful implementation

of rural urbanisation plans to parallel the development of rural industrialisation. The ultimate objective is to build up national unity.

11. The State's programme of rural urbanisation, as a logical complement to the programme of rural industrialisation, can be further nurtured, regulated and developed through the process of industrial and economic activities already generated by the industrial programme. It will enable citizens of different ethnic origins and of different income groups who are working together in the new industries to build their homes close to one another. Apart from jobs and housing, our new workers will also be provided with all the basic amenities that a good community requires, such as commercial areas, civic and social amenities, adequate public transport, recreational facilities and local government services. The ultimate result anticipated

from these developments is the blossoming of the new urban centre into a viable and modern town, which will become a strong base for the development of a united Malaysia society.

12. Today we further see the successful completion of the 313 units of semi-detached and terrace houses constructed by the Penang Development Corporation. This scheme was launched in 1974 at a comparatively difficult time of economic stagflation and rising costs of construction materials. In spite of all these economic strains, in less than a year, all the units were completed and were taken up. More than 30% (namely, 95 units) were taken up by Bumiputras.

13. The Penang Development Corporation, encouraged by this result and in anticipation of the recovery of the economy as well as in line with the Third Malaysia Plan, will accelerate the development of the subsequent phases

of housing development in this area. The houses that were built are to serve the housing needs of a wide cross-section of our population, especially those in the lower middle-income group as well as the new workers. It is true that many in the lower-income group will require even lower cost housing, particularly if they are to own them. The detailed programme for further construction of housing and commercial facilities that have been planned will include such low cost housing for purchase or for rent.

14. In the next few months the Penang Development Corporation will be implementing the programme to put up 2 blocks of residential flats comprising 60 units each and a 5-storey commercial-cum-residential complex. The commercial-cum-residential complex will, to an extent, serve the basic commercial needs of this growing Township and the residential units will meet the housing needs of the people, especially those from the lower-income group.

It is also proposed to build "transitional area housing" to supplement the planned housing development and a prototype of such housing can be seen nearby.

15. As for the future, the Penang Development Corporation plans to promote 25,000 residential units and 3.5 million square feet of commercial space in this Township. Here, I must mention again that the State, especially through its main development agency, the Penang Development Corporation, will also provide the other basic social and civic amenities required for the proper development of a well-planned Township. Included in the overall planning for the future development of this Township will be a Hospital Complex, a Police Station, a Fire Station, a Court House, Government Offices, Schools,

Religious buildings and landscaped open spaces for recreation. When fully developed it is estimated that the new Township will have a population of 150,000.

The new Town will form part of the Greater Metropolitan Area of future Penang.

16. I would like to take this opportunity to stress that the vital factor contributing to the success in the launching of this new Township has been the constant close cooperation between the people and the Government. This constant cooperation is essential for social stability and economic development. The close cooperation existing between the people and the Government in the State of Penang augurs well for the future success of other development projects in the State. It is also important for our people to understand that the primary objective of the Rukun Negara and the New Economic Policy

is to build a united and happy Nation and to create a fair and just society for all Malaysians.

17. In any form of development, there are some people who may be affected in one way or another, especially when they have to be relocated to make way for new development. I would like to repeat here that the State Government will at all times minimise any such hardship when it occurs. I am certain that our people fully understand that the benefits of development will accrue to the community as a whole and I am sure that the cooperation between the people and the Government will ensure progress that will contribute to a happier and more meaningful way of life for future generations in the State of Penang.

18. Our people must also understand that they have to become fully committed to the task of achieving the

objectives of the Third Malaysia Plan, namely, to eradicate poverty, to restructure society and to strengthen the people's will and determination to sustain the nation's peace and security. To all those who have chosen to be pioneers in this new Township, I extend a very warm welcome to them. To those yet to come, my advice to them is to be brave in making up their minds to come into these new areas of development where they can achieve a better quality of life. Our people must become fully involved in the task of preserving the security of our nation in order to protect our way of life. They must join the Rukun Tetangga Schemes when these are set up in their areas.

19. I am confident that the citizens of this new Township will live up to the spirit of self-reliance which Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri, Datuk Hussein Onn symbolises. His presence here should give us all the

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encouragement to reach out to the better future in Malaysia for all.

20. In conjunction with the launching of this new Township, I wish to announce with great pleasure that Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri Malaysia has consented that the main road leading into this new Township will be named Jalan Datuk Hussein Onn.

21. I now have great pleasure to call upon Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri, Datuk Hussein Onn to address you and to officially open this new Township.