

Speech by Y.A.B. Ketua Menteri, Pulau Pinang for the Opening Ceremony of the Regional Seminar in Penang on the "Role of Safety Committees in Industrial Undertakings" to be held at Dewan Sri Pinang on Monday, 15th November, 1976 at 9.00 a.m.

Encik Abdul Aziz bin Ahmad, Pengerusi Seminar,
Y.B. Encik K. Pathmanaban, Setiausaha Parlimen kepada
Kementerian Buruh dan Tenaga Rakyat,
Zif-zif Yang Dihormati,
Tuan-tuan dan Puan-puan:

I deem it a great honour to have been invited to officiate at the opening of this Seminar on the "Role of Safety Committees in Industrial Undertakings".

2. The organisation of this Seminar is extremely timely. As industrial development takes place in this country, our people must become more and more aware of the need to establish Safety Committees in industrial undertakings.

3. Industrial growth in Malaysia has led to an increasing number of industrial accidents occurring each year.

According to the Handbook of Labour Statistics, Peninsular

Malaysia, 1972 to 1974, compiled by the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, the figures of industrial accidents were reported as follows: 1972 - 13,462; 1973 - 12,624; 1974 - 11,129.

4. The number of working days lost for the years 1972 and 1974 are as follows: 1972 - 371,751; 1974 - 309,834.

Of the industrial accidents occurring in 1972 and 1974, the number of accidents involving deaths, permanent disability and temporary disability are as follows:

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1974</u>
Deaths	387	311
Permanent disability	1,036	805
Temporary disability	12,039	10,013

These figures do not represent the actual number of industrial accidents as the Social Security Department also deals with employment injuries which are not available.

5. The Government and the private sector are equally concerned over this increasing number of accidents. Recently, the Honourable Minister of Labour and Manpower has pointed out that such industrial accidents have resulted in enormous losses of our country's economy as well as to cause unnecessary suffering, hardship and anguish to victims and their families.

6. It is essential for all those responsible to take strong positive action as soon as possible in order to check this trend of increase in industrial accidents in order to sustain our country's economy as well as to alleviate unnecessary suffering on the part of our workers.

7. In every industrial undertaking, management plays a very important role in the control and prevention of accidents taking place in industry. The welfare of the workers in industrial plants must be a major responsibility of the management. However, the success of accident prevention programme will have to depend upon mutual cooperation between the workers

and the management. The most effective manner whereby this cooperation can succeed is on the workshop floor where employees and management must actively participate through the establishment of Safety Committees to take all the steps possible to prevent industrial accidents from occurring.

8. This Seminar is directed to top-level management and is aimed to provide an opportunity for those concerned to deliberate on the industrial safety methods and to exchange ideas on how best we can determine the role of Safety Committees in industrial undertakings. The experience of the speakers in this Seminar will, I am sure, be useful to all of you attending the Seminar.

9. It is a recognised fact that safe and healthy working environment leads to increased productivity. I am certain that as we move into the modern age industrial development, factory management and ownership will pay greater attention to the

industrial safety of their employees. It is necessary for the industrial sector to ensure that everyone involved in industry must fully appreciate the legal responsibility and moral obligation to prevent accidents on the workshop floor. No one should be allowed to escape this responsibility and obligation. Therefore, Seminar such as this which will help to disseminate the concept of Safety Committees in industrial undertakings is important and economical.

10. It is very encouraging to note that so many industrial organisations have sent participants to this Seminar. The response clearly indicates the general interest and awareness of the urgent need for industrial accident control through Safety Committees. I hope that the overall response shown by the industrial sector in our community will eliminate any "Black Sheep" who still remain careless to or unaware of the problems.

11. I would like to congratulate the Factories and Machinery Department for initiating this Seminar and the Kementerian Kesihatan dan Pusat Daya Pengeluaran Negara, particularly the Penang Branch, who jointly help in the organisation.

12. On this note, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in declaring this Seminar officially open.