

PERSPECTIVES

Inaugural Issue

**Yayasan Alumni PTD
&
Persatuan Alumni Pegawai Tadbir Dan Diplomatik**

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**YAYASAN ALUMNI PTD
PERSATUAN ALUMNI PEGAWAI TADBIR DAN DIPLOMATIK**

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Yayasan Alumni PTD
&
Persatuan Alumni Pegawai Tadbir Dan Diplomatik
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PERUTUSAN DARI PRESIDEN

Persatuan Alumni Pegawai Tadbir dan Diplomatik (Alumni PTD), ditubuhkan pada tahun 1989, terdiri daripada ahli-ahli yang merupakan pesara pegawai kanan kerajaan dalam Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik (PTD). Semasa dalam perkhidmatan, ramai yang telah memegang jawatan tinggi, termasuk Ketua Setiausaha Negara, Ketua Setiausaha Kementerian, Ketua Pengarah Jabatan Persekutuan dan Duta Besar serta Pesuruhjaya Tinggi dalam Perkhidmatan Luar Negeri. Himpunan kumpulan pengalaman ini sudah tentu menjadi khazanah pengetahuan berguna kepada generasi masa kini dan akan datang, sekiranya didokumentasikan secara teratur. Oleh itu, adalah menjadi salah satu aktiviti utama Alumni menerbitkan buku, jurnal dan buletin.

Buletin diterbitkan dua kali setahun untuk menyampaikan maklumat kepada ahli mengenai aktiviti Persatuan. Beberapa buku telah diterbitkan sejak tahun 1989 dan di antara yang terkenal ialah 'Service Par Excellence' (2004) dan 'At the Forefront of Nation Building' (2014). Buku yang pertama adalah mengenai sejarah perkembangan PTD, dari awal abad ke-15 hingga sekitar zaman Kemerdekaan. Manakala, yang terakhir menjurus pada sumbangan PTD dalam pembangunan negara.

Kini, Alumni PTD menerbitkan satu lagi penerbitan yang berjudul 'Perspectives'. Seperti namanya, ini adalah usaha untuk memberi peluang kepada anggota Alumni berkongsi sudut pandangan mereka mengenai peristiwa dan pengalaman luas mereka semasa berkhidmat dalam Kerajaan. Disamping itu, mereka juga berpeluang menyampaikan pandangan mengenai isu-isu semasa dalam perkhidmatan awam. Secara kolektif, mereka ini membolehkan Persatuan Alumni mengwujudkan gedung pengetahuan - Bank Pengetahuan.

Sasaran khalayak penerbitan ini adalah ahli Alumni PTD, pegawai yang sedang berkhidmat dan masyarakat umum. Sementara ahli-ahli dapat mengimbau kenangan masa lalu, pegawai yang sedang berkhidmat pula dapat belajar dari pengalaman pegawai-pegawai yang telah bersara. 'Perspectives' juga akan menjadi sumber input bagi para penyelidik tempatan dan luar negara, yang berminat untuk belajar mengenai perkhidmatan awam di negara ini, khususnya Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik. Hanya sebilangan naskhah yang akan diterbitkan. Walau bagaimanapun, 'Perspectives' akan dimuatnaik di laman web *ptdalumni.org* bagi sebaran dan menjangkau khalayak yang lebih luas. Sebagai permulaan, 'Perspectives' akan diterbitkan setahun sekali dengan artikel dalam bahasa Melayu dan Inggeris untuk merangsang minat dan kami berharap akan dapat menerima lebih banyak artikel daripada ahli-ahli Alumni.

Tan Sri Dato' Sri Sallehuddin Mohamed

Presiden,
Alumni PTD

NOTE FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR

Welcome to the inaugural issue of 'Perspectives'. After several months of planning, the Editorial Team was finally able to select and edit eight articles of varying topics and interest.

The first article, 'Perspectives on Malaysia's Development Policies', examines the socio-economic development policies put in place by the Government since 1955, including the New Economic Policy.

The second article on 'Reflections on Leadership' describes several different ways of looking at leadership styles and traits of a good leader. In the final analysis, being a good leader is to ensure the successful achievement of the organisational goals.

The third, on the topic of 'Public Service Salary Scheme: A Legacy of Tun Mohammad Suffian Hashim', details the important and enduring principles underlying the review of Public Service Salary Scheme by the Commission chaired by Tun Suffian.

The fourth, entitled 'Establishing Institutions of Higher Learning: Involvement of ADS Officers', focuses on the roles of ADS officers in the development of the National University, University of Technology and University of Technology MARA.

While the fifth article, is an interview with the author of 'My Reflections of Life', in which, the author explains his passion for writing and when and how it had developed, the sixth article '*Seberat Mata Memandang*', is a reflection of the writer's experiences in playing a variety of roles while working at the Malaysian Students Department in Melbourne, Australia,

Pudu Puda Di Bariloche: Misi Diplomatik Ke Argentina, the seventh article, describes the writer's and his diplomatic mission's journey to Argentina, what he experienced there and the outcome of the mission itself.

The Dynamics of AI and 4IR in the Business of the Government Towards SPV 2030', the eighth and last article, explains how recent developments, such as AI and 4IR, can be used by the Government in achieving its policy on Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) 2030.

I hope you will enjoy reading these articles and that it will encourage more members of the Alumni to write and share their vast and interesting experiences.

Tan Sri Nuraizah Abdul Hamid
Chief Editor

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PERSPECTIVES ON MALAYSIA'S DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim

I was privileged to have served in the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department in the early years of my career in the PTD (*Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik*), then called the MCS (Malaysian Civil Service) and later in the Ministry of Finance. These were the two central agencies responsible for formulating the country's economic, financial and fiscal policies to develop the economy, reduce poverty and raise the standard of living of the people.

The First Phase of Development

When Malaya became independent in 1957, the country was still recovering from the devastation during the Japanese occupation. Then came the armed conflict with the communist insurgents which lasted several years.

The First Five Year Development Plan (1956-60), which was drawn up when British officers were still in command was, therefore, a rehabilitation programme. The Plan focused on repairing the damage to the infrastructure facilities, especially roads and bridges, and restoring public services like water supply, electricity, education and health.

In the Second Five Year Development Plan period (1961-65), the government began to launch ambitious development programmes to address the problems of poverty, low productivity and under-employment.

A large percentage of the development expenditure was spent on rural development, providing drainage and irrigation facilities to the *padi* growing areas and opening up new land settlement schemes for landless agricultural families and expanding the basic amenities to the remote villages. After double cropping of *padi* was introduced in the mid-sixties in the Muda Irrigation Scheme in Kedah, 50,000 smallholders saw a significant increase in their household incomes.

The new land development programme under the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) resettled about 100,000 rural families in new settlement schemes, with each settler growing rubber or oil palm on economic-sized land lots.

Other agencies such as the Rubber Research Institute (RRI), the Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (RISDA), and the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA) all played their respective important roles to increase productivity and income among the smallholders. Our engineers, architects and town planners did an excellent job of building roads, ports, and airports, as well as electricity and telecommunication facilities to provide the country with modern infrastructure to facilitate trade and investment activities.

Malaysia was praised internationally for its early emphasis on the rural areas where most of the population lived and where most of the poor households were. By developing the rural areas, Malaysia created a large market base for its emerging import-substituting manufacturing industry to expand.

The New Economic Policy

With better health facilities, the country's population was growing at a rapid rate in the sixties. Family planning was not yet widely practised. This, coupled with the vast expansion of educational opportunities in the rural areas, resulted in the number of school leavers joining the labour force to increase rapidly, leading to the labour force increasing at a faster rate than the growth of employment.

The job seekers from the rural areas migrating in increasing numbers to the cities made urban youth unemployment a growing problem. Unemployment rose to dangerous levels at 7 to 8 %, with higher rates in the major urban centres.

In May 1969, there were racial riots in K.L. Although there were political factors behind the riots, many attributed the social unrest to the rising unemployment and the income inequalities. These social problems were exacerbated by the fact that poverty and economic imbalances in Malaysia were closely identified with race.

Following high level discussions in the National Economic Consultative Council, represented by all communities and political parties, it was agreed that Malaysia needed a new approach to plan and implement its development programme to not only focus on growth but also to give equal emphasis on distribution. Thus, the New Economic Policy was introduced in 1970 with the twin objectives of eradicating poverty irrespective of race and restructuring society so as to reduce the racial imbalances in the economy.

The second objective called for increasing the participation and ownership of Malays and other *bumiputeras* in the modern economic activities through the creation of a

Bumiputera Commercial and Industrial Community (BCIC). This second objective raised a lot of questions on how it was going to be implemented, considering that in Malaysia the private sector had always been the back bone of the economy.

The Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975) stated that growth was essential to create jobs and increase incomes to reduce unemployment and raise standards of living in both the rural and urban areas. It set an ambitious target of 8% GDP growth over the 1970-90 Outline Perspective Plan for achieving these objectives within the context of growth so that no one would feel a sense of loss and deprivation in promoting *bumiputera* participation in the economy in terms of management, ownership and control. The policy of restructuring the corporate sector was accompanied by the creation of several new institutions to act as trustees for the Malays and to participate directly in the economy on their behalf.

These statutory bodies and government owned companies (GLCs) grew in number at the federal and state levels to increase significantly the size of the public sector in the economy.

The sharp increase in government development expenditure under the NEP helped push the economy to grow faster than in the sixties. Fortunately, Malaysia was blessed with the discovery of new oil resources to raise oil production and provide the revenue to sustain the high levels of government spending... The OPEC crisis in 1973 led to high oil prices and this enabled the Federal Government to maintain a healthy financial situation.

Another favourable development was the arrival of the semiconductor industry to Penang and the Klang Valley as American multinational corporations chose Malaysia as a base for their expansion.

The big increase in foreign investment from multinational corporations in the semiconductor and other export-oriented manufacturing industries created the trickle-down effects to the local supporting industries and enabled the economy to become much more diversified and stable. The growth impulse from the Bayan Lepas Free Trade Industrial Zone on Penang island spread to the mainland Seberang Perai and radiated inland to as far as Sungai Petani in Kedah and Nibong Tebal, thus bringing higher job opportunities to the rural heartlands. Similarly, the Klang Valley developed very fast into a high growth centre with the expansion of foreign investments in the industrial and commercial sectors. The regional impact of Klang Valley extended the urban development to Seremban and Malacca.

Invigorating Economic Confidence in the Country

As with all economies, Malaysia had its bad times too. In 1985, the country was faced with a sharp decline of the export sector, which forced the government to cut down on its expenditures, plunging the private sector into a recession. The second recession occurred in 1997 following the East Asia financial crisis.

The Government responded to the economic crisis and the run on the currency by introducing capital controls. This drastic action on capital flows came as a shock to the financial system and led to a sharp decline in confidence. Realising the need to repair the damage, reforms were introduced to bring back confidence to the economy. Thus, Bank Negara Malaysia, the Securities Commission, the Treasury and other agencies such as Khazanah carried out reforms on the banking and financial regulations, on fiscal and financial policies as well as raising the standards of corporate governance in the banking and corporate sectors, including the major GLCs.

The New Economic Model (NEM) Report to the National Economic Action Council in 2005 stated that, although Malaysia had achieved commendable growth rates in the past, after 1990 the economy was showing signs of a slowdown. The economy remained stuck in the middle-income trap while the East Asian Tigers (Singapore, Korea and Taiwan), despite having poorer natural resources than Malaysia, had proceeded to grow steadily to become high income and fully developed countries. Malaysia at one time had higher per capita incomes than they had. They have now become high-income, fully-developed countries, leaving Malaysia far behind.

The NEM Report made several recommendations for structural reforms to enable the country to become more efficient to compete in the global economy. One of the most important recommendations was to realign the NEP from being race-based to needs-based so as to create a competitive culture for dynamic growth and reduce the wastages and leakages associated with cronyism, favouritism and corruption in the implementation of the race-based policies. The NEM Report stated that, in emphasising the poor and the disadvantaged, the Malays will still be the main beneficiaries as they account for most of the households in need of assistance. Further, the NEM report stressed on the need for Malaysia to reform the institutions of government to bring about integrity, transparency and accountability that are so essential for building the confidence factor in attracting high quality and state of the art technologies to come to this country.

A reliable and trustworthy system of governance has become an indispensable requirement for a country to become part of the global economy. These reforms

became more urgent when the country was plunged into bad publicity across the world over the 1MDB scandals and other financial mismanagement. Foreign investors and analysts attributed the scandals to the weaknesses in the system of governance, with no safeguards to check on the excessive powers of the politicians in government.

The Reforms for a Better Malaysia

Following the 2018 general election, the new government pledged to uphold the rule of law and empower the institutions of government such as the Parliament, the Judiciary and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to provide the checks and balance against the abuse of power. In addition, the new Government's reform agenda included the repeal of draconian laws to remove the injustices and strengthen our democracy to protect the rights of citizens to freedom of expression and assembly. It will take time for the reforms to be fully implemented. However, there are concerns that the key reforms on human rights might be shelved or deferred in view of the political sensitivities especially on matters related to race and religion and the rights of Muslim women. The abolition of Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) as a security law is taking far too long to implement. There is also concern that the bill on Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) might be diluted to render it ineffective for checking on police misbehaviour. There is reluctance among both government and opposition politicians to introduce a law for regulating political funding so as to check on the use of money politics in federal, state and party elections.

On economic policy, the government this year introduced the Shared Prosperity Vision which basically is a revised version of the NEP and Vision 2020 with the emphasis that the distribution objectives will be based on needs instead of race. But the government also clarified that Malays will continue to receive preferential treatment in promoting their participation in the business and corporate sector, as in the past.

No policy change has been announced about reforming the GLCs. Although there are GLCs which operate with high standards of corporate governance and are financially stable, such as the companies under Khazanah, Employees Provident Fund (EPF), Petroleum National Berhad (PETRONAS) and Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB), many others are politically linked at the board as well as management levels. Further, many GLCs are competing directly in the commercial sector with the support of cheap government funding, thus giving them an unfair advantage over genuine private sector companies. This has led to the crowding out effect on private

enterprise, which is not healthy for an economy that aspires to be a high income country.

The government should introduce reforms to ensure that those GLCs that cannot stand on their own feet and are continually losing money should be divested, either to genuine entrepreneurs or if there are no takers, they should be closed down. The GLCs that are strategic to the country and which are financially capable of providing revenue channels for the Treasury should remain in the public sector. They can also play a catalytic role in pioneering into new growth industries and leading the economy in technology innovations.

The Over-sized Public Sector

The public sector comprising the Federal and state governments plus their statutory bodies and GLCs has grown so big that they now account for over 50 % of the GDP in terms of investment and consumption expenditures, overtaking the private sector as the growth stimulus. As the public sector grows in size, so has the national debt, which now accounts for over 50% of GDP. The Federal government is the main reason for the increase in the national debt, because with the revenue surplus over the operating expenditure being so small, the development budget has to be financed almost entirely from borrowing.

A high percentage of the Federal Government's operating budget is mainly payments for public sector emoluments and pensions. With the rapid growth in all branches of the Public Service and the frequent upward revisions in government salaries and pensions, the financial burden on the Federal Government has been rapidly growing to the extent that it may threaten the financial stability of the country unless the tax system can be expanded to cope with it. There should be a thorough review of the size of the public sector to compare it with revenue growth, so that the country is not caught in a financial crisis due to the escalating costs of maintaining a big Public Service.

Towards Becoming a Fully-developed Country

I am confident that as Malaysia is blessed with a rich endowment of land and other natural resources, our prospects to grow at a faster rate of 6% to 7% p.a compared to 4% to 5% now are great. Rapid and steady growth is essential to enable the country to achieve full employment with rising salaries and incomes and spending power that will not only provide households for their basic necessities of life but also for leisure and entertainment, leaving enough savings for old age. In addition to the institutional reforms mentioned earlier, such growth in wages and salaries requires Malaysia to

review its policy on the import of migrant unskilled workers and pay more attention towards automation to reduce the reliance on imported labour.

Further, it is essential to stress on the development of human resources by investing more heavily on skills training and language proficiency, especially English, so that with higher productivity, wages can increase at a faster rate than now. There is also a need to reward our achievers based on their performance, so as to increase efficiency levels in both the private sector and the Public Service, create a culture of meritocracy and reduce the brain drain.

As many have said, Malaysia is one of the most colourful and interesting countries to live and work in because of the cultural and racial diversity of its population, a country that is free from natural disasters and is located in the fastest and most dynamic growth region in the world. All that we need to do is implement the reforms as fast as possible so that the country can develop quickly to join the ranks of the Asian Tigers.

Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim joined the Administrative and Diplomatic Service on 1 April 1964. He retired as the Secretary General, Ministry of Finance on 2 August 1994.

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP

Tun Arshad Ayub

“One day an 18 month old female monkey named Imo started to wash her sweet potato in the sea before eating it. We can imagine that it tasted better without the grit and sand; may be it even was slightly salty. Imo showed her playmates and her mother how to do it, and her friends showed their mothers, and gradually more and more monkeys began to wash their sweet potatoes instead of eating them grit and all. At first, only the adults who imitated their children learned and, gradually, others did also. One day, the observers saw that all the monkeys on that particular island were washing their sweet potatoes.” (Tom Heuerman PhD & Diane Olson PhD: *The Myth of the Hundredth Monkey*)

My years in the civil service as an ADS officer, rising through the ranks, was certainly no monkey business at all. It was a time when the Internet was not even invented. Facebook, Google and Yahoo were unheard of. Everyone had to depend on school, public and research centre libraries as well as on one’s own ingenuity and resourcefulness.

I was appointed the first Director of MARA¹ Institute of Technology or ITM (now University Technology MARA or UiTM) 43 years ago. I was deeply honoured to have been chosen for what seemed to me the most exciting job in higher education then - to lay the path for young Malay men and women who had potential and who were in dire need for a second chance with their future. As an economist and statistician with a love for history, I saw the need to recognise and build on what I was already doing well. At the same time, I would not rest until I find better ways to do things that I was not doing so well. At ITM, we pioneered the first twinning programme in Malaysia, at a time when there were no private colleges or universities. There was a tripartite arrangement between the Asia Foundation, the University of Ohio in the United States and ITM that enabled ITM diploma holders to complete their degree programmes at the University of Ohio after a year there. Further, the focus in ITM was not so much on rote learning. The focus was more on questioning, interchange and challenge - on equipping students with skills and attitudes for life-long learning. In fact, more and more research and learning involve cross-disciplines.

¹ **MARA** – Majlis Amanah Rakyat

Apart from ITM, I have served in several organizations in different capacities, which include the Rural Industry Development Authority (RIDA and later called MARA), World Bank, Finance Division of the Treasury, and the Penang State Secretariat. As ADS officers, we must understand three fundamental principles. First, we must serve well, do our best and be fully committed, in any position that we are in. We cannot choose the position we want. Second, as leaders, we do not do things alone, we need the help of others. Third, we can listen to every little thing but finally we have to do it our way. The late Honourable Dr. Tan Chee Koon, Member of Parliament for Kepong appreciated what I did for ITM when he said in Parliament on 18 July 1973, “In the words of the Deputy Prime Minister, MARA has a sacred mission to carry out and is undertaking this task with great success. The M.I.T. or I.T.M., shows what a dedicated Malay can do for the *Bumiputras* and this afternoon, I wish to congratulate Dr. Arshad bin Ayub on the excellent work he is doing for MIT. His sterling work for the MIT and the nation has been recognized by the Ohio University which has recently conferred on him the Honorary LL.D. Malaysia can be justifiably proud of Dr. Arshad bin Ayub, but literally he is a prophet without honour in his own country.”

As ADS officers, we need to be up-to-date with the latest thinking. For example, since the 1990’s, public sector governance has had a major role in development thinking. There are, however, different perspectives on its meaning and scope globally. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) listed five different perspectives as follows:

- a. Traditional public administration - rule-based governance;
- b. New Public Management - results-based governance;
- c. Network governance - network among organizations inside and outside the public sector, nationally and internationally;
- d. Power and political economy - formal and informal power and interests and their mechanisms for articulation; and
- e. Historical perspective - context-specific and path-dependent trajectories through which governance has developed in a country.

In my experience, the roles and challenges of an ADS officer, irrespective of whether development efforts are aimed at improving social services, transportation, logistics, agriculture or other specific areas, has always and will always be an arduous task, as it is usually a long-term process rife with political and economic interests. Therein lies the real test of one’s loyalty, discipline, professionalism and leadership.

There is a plethora of leadership models - transformational leadership, tribal leadership, situational leadership, leadership by walking around and leadership presence - ability to think with clarity, express one's self with confidence and influence with purpose. Experience and skills have always been greatly valued throughout the ages. However, luck and timing also play an important role as expressed by the 16th century Indian poet Tulsidas:

The same Arjuna with his arrow

Failed miserably this time

Truly, luck and timing influence

Success in ways sublime

This an important lesson

To remember at all times.

What defines and what diminishes leadership is as intriguing to me as it was to Tulsidas above. My experience in the Government and my mentors and former bosses had in many ways had an effect on my personal growth and worldview. A popular image of a leader is that people are impressed, stimulated and motivated to follow on the heels of an inspirational leader. The leader's role then is to create the future and lead the people. He is to have a vision and unerring judgment.

Unfortunately, this is a flawed model. Forthright and listening leadership style requires the leader to make his own position clear in terms of how the management team should function, the key issues that should be addressed and how to address them. Members are given the space and time to outline their individual perspectives on these issues. Healthy and vigorous discussion coupled with the leader's openness and willingness to listen will enable all of them to have a high level of agreement on the short and long term objectives.

The Three Levels of Leadership is a leadership model designed as a practical tool for developing a person's leadership 'presence', know-how and skills.² It aims to summarise what leaders have to do, not only to bring leadership to their group or organization, but also to develop themselves technically and psychologically as

² James Scouller, The Three Levels of Leadership: How to Develop Your Leadership Presence, Knowhow and Skill, Management Books, 2000, 2011

leaders. For these reasons, it has been classified as an ‘integrated psychological’ theory of leadership and sometimes as the 3P model of leadership (Public, Private and Personal leadership).

The Three Levels of Leadership model attempts to combine the strengths of older leadership theories while addressing their limitations. For example, the trait theory failed to develop a universally agreed list of leadership qualities and successful leaders seem to defy classification from the traits perspective. It also posits that leaders are born and not made. The managerial grid model under the behavioural styles theory proposed five leadership styles based on two axes - concern for task versus concern for people. The ideal is the team style which balances the concern for task as well as concern for people. Unfortunately, it may not suit all circumstances, such as emergencies and turnarounds. Situational and contingency theories like situational leadership theory, path-goal theory and leadership continuum assume leaders can change their behaviours at will to meet differing circumstances. This may not be so because of leaders’ unconscious fixed beliefs, fears or ingrained habits. Functional theories like the Five Leadership Practices model and the Action-Centered Leadership theory assume that once the leader understands and has been trained in the required leadership behaviours, the leaders will apply them as needed regardless of their personality. However, like situational theories, many cannot adjust because of hidden beliefs and old habits.

Leaders need to master their inner psychology if they are to adopt unfamiliar behaviours at will. The best leaders usually have something beyond their behaviour - something distinctive that commands attention, wins people’s trust and enables them to lead successfully and it is called ‘leadership presence’. That ‘something’, that ‘presence’, varies from person to person and is hard to define in terms of personality characteristics. Hence, traits and other leadership theories fail to capture the elusive phenomenon of ‘presence’.

The importance and development of leadership ‘presence’ is a central feature of the Three Levels of Leadership model. It takes more than the right know-how, skills and behaviours to lead well. It demands ‘presence’.

What is ‘presence’? At its root, it is wholeness - the rare but attainable inner alignment of self-identity, purpose and feelings that eventually lead to freedom from fear. It reveals itself as the magnetic, radiating effect one has on others when you are the authentic you, giving them your full respect and attention, speaking honestly and letting your unique character traits flow. As leaders, we must be technically competent

to gain others' respect, but it is our unique genuine 'presence' that inspires people and prompt them to trust us - in short, to want us as their leader.

'Presence' is not the same as 'charisma'. Leaders can be charismatic by relying on a job title, fame, skillful acting or by the projection of an aura of 'specialness' by followers. 'Presence', however, is something deeper, more authentic, more fundamental and more powerful and does not depend on social status. Scouller contrasted the mental and moral resilience of a person with real 'presence' with the susceptibility to pressure and immoral actions of someone whose charisma rests only on acting skills (and the power their followers give them), not their true inner qualities. Scouller also suggested that each person's authentic 'presence' is unique and outlined seven qualities of 'presence', namely, personal power - command over one's thoughts, feelings and actions; high real self-esteem; the drive to learn and to grow; a balance between an energetic sense of purpose with a concern for the service of others and respect for their free will; intuition; being in the now; and inner peace of mind and a sense of fulfillment. According to this model 'presence' is developed by practising personal leadership.

In my experience, different bosses adopt their own style of leadership according to their favourite leadership gurus. I prefer my own style of leadership and it does not depart much from the generic leadership practices. In my opinion, the cardinal principle of an advanced society and nation is the ability to 'agree to disagree' and yet at the end of the day, achieve our organizational objectives.

Tun Arshad Ayub joined the Rural Industrial Development Authority as Cadet Assistant Rural Development Officer in September 1951 before joining the Administrative and Diplomatic Service on 18 July 1958. He retired as Secretary General, Ministry of Land and Regional Development on 14 November 1983.

**PUBLIC SERVICE SALARY SCHEME:
A LEGACY OF TUN MOHAMMAD SUFFIAN HASHIM**

Mr. Veloo Saminathan

The death of Tun Mohammad Suffian Hashim at the age of 81 on September 26, 2000 in Petaling Jaya caused many in the country to feel a twinge of sadness. Tun Suffian, or "Suff", as he was affectionately known to his admirers and friends, was a legal luminary: a Cambridge product who, when he retired at the mandatory age of 65, applicable to the Judiciary, held the highest post of Lord President. Among the tributes paid to his memory in the newspapers was the claim that, with his passing, an ideal was lost and that an era had indeed come to an end in the annals of the Judiciary.

That Tun Suffian, in a long and illustrious career, had played a decisive and critical role in impacting the public service cannot be denied. In 1964 he was appointed Chairman of a Commission to review the pay schemes and terms and conditions of service of public sector employees and to propose suitable recommendations. In addition to one local member there were three foreign members: one from New Zealand, one from the United Kingdom and the third from India. Those who appeared before the Commission, including Trade Union leaders, found the Indian member to be particularly hard. It was claimed that being a North Indian Brahmin - a senior Indian Administrative Service bureaucrat - and a vegetarian, his living expenses were very low and therefore he found the pay scheme of Malaysian civil servants to be lavish! The New Zealand member, on the other hand, found it to be meagre!

The Suffian Salaries Commission Report or the *Suffian Report*, as it came to be known, proposed a number of radical (one might call them even 'revolutionary') principles which profoundly altered the shape and content of the pay scheme of public-sector employees. The recommended new scheme was based upon the following principles:

a. **The Clean-Wage Principle**

All permanent allowances were to be integrated with the basic salary to form a single Clean-Wage.

b. **The Principle of Rate for the Job**

No distinction was to be made, as previously, in the quantum of the salaries of married officers with children, married officers without children or bachelor-officers.

c. **The Principle of Fair Comparison**

The pay and perquisites of public sector employees should compare favourably with the net worth of comparable appointments in the private sector.

d. **The Principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work**

The distinction which applied previously in the quantum of remuneration on gender grounds was to be abolished. Four other recommendations, equally important, were:

- All permanent employees were to be accorded pensionable status;
- The mandatory retirement age to remain at 55, but the maximum pension payable should be limited to half the salary at the time of retirement;
- A subsidised Housing Loan Scheme should be implemented to enable all permanent and pensionable employees to build or purchase their own houses; and
- A Family Pensions Scheme to be introduced to provide for family benefits.

The Suffian Report bore the unmistakable imprint of Tun Suffian in that, for a Report of its import, it was couched in simple language shorn of any pedantic overtones: it was clear and direct to the point. Those who expected it to be weighty and ponderous were sorely disappointed. In fact, when the Report was released, there were reservations in certain sections of the Trade Unions at its simplistic structure. They failed to realise that Tun Suffian, as also in his legal judgements, believed more in clarity, depth and amplitude rather than in rhetoric and literary flashes just to create an impact.

It is now possible to review the Suffian Report and examine its effects over the years. Its implications have been so vast that it is possible even to write a Ph.D thesis on it. Among other things, it laid the groundwork to formulate many of the ideas on which subsequent pay revisions were made. What the present generation of public sector employees take for granted were actually examined in great depth and passionately debated before the new principles were formulated. The Colonial mould had to be broken and the Suffian Commission broke it irretrievably and with visionary zeal paving the way for radical changes to be effected in consonance with the needs of changing times brought about by the achievement of Merdeka. The following are some examples.

- a. The Clean-Wage Principle did away with a whole system of allowances which were paid over and above the Basic Pay, which in the course of years had become permanent. Incorporation of the permanent allowances into the Basic Pay not only rationalised the system but it also enhanced the quantum of the pension

payable when an officer retired on the new pay scheme.

- b. The Principle of Rate for the Job meant that marital status should not be a factor in determining the net worth of an officer. The Suffian Commission argued that marital status was not a factor: it was the quality and output of work that should form the critical factors. This may appear to be simple and self-evident now but it was not so to the Colonial authorities to whom such an iniquitous proposition constituted a basic "principle".
- c. The Principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work meant that the gender of an officer should not be used to determine differentials in the quantum of the salary paid in specific cases. Under the Colonial system, women officers, despite having the same qualifications and performing the same duties, were only eligible for a lesser quantum of salary compared to their male counterparts. A female officer, once married, was also required to resign and after a day's break in service was re-employed but only on a temporary basis!

The recommendation that all permanent employees should be made pensionable had far-reaching consequences, in particular, on the vast number of employees in the lower categories. They did not enjoy pensionable status although they were in service for a full term, only retiring at the mandatory retirement age of 55. According to this recommendation they had to be graded as permanent and granted pensionable status. This meant that they were not required to contribute to the Employees Provident Fund, as previously, but on retirement, were eligible for pensions benefits. An even more vital consideration was that as permanent and pensionable officers they were eligible for subsidised housing loans to purchase a house.

The proposal that all permanent and pensionable employees should be eligible for subsidised housing loans was in itself a critical recommendation that relieved public sector employees of the heavy burden of acquiring a roof over their head. This recommendation was made at a time when housing loans were virtually non-existent, unlike at present when every Bank provides attractive housing loans to its clients. A concomitant effect, possibly not expected by the Suffian Commission, was that it injected an extremely powerful booster into housing development in the country which, in a short span of a few years became a multi-billion Ringgit industry supported by more than 150 sub-industries.

While all sectors of the public service commended the Suffian Commission for the radical principles which it proposed - many describing them even as 'revolutionary' - there were many who were not happy on the quanta that were recommended as

remuneration. These groups expected that, after waiting for so many years, they would all be given hefty pay hikes. They represented for what they claimed were gross anomalies to the Government through the National Whitley Council threatening, in the process, to go even on strike. The Government sought to remove these anomalies, so long as in so doing, it did not create further anomalies or unduly inflate its salaries bill.

In fairness to Tun Suffian, he and his Commission had to frame their recommendations taking into account, as required by their Terms of Reference, 'the financial situation of the country'. The Government in those days depended on tin and rubber, timber exports and manufactured goods but not on such a stupendous scale as at present. Oil and gas had yet to be discovered, and in addition, the Government was committed to develop the country, rural development being one of its priorities. Despite these difficulties the Government implemented the Suffian Report backdating it to 1st January, 1970 which enabled those eligible to even collect arrears of pay.

Subsequent to the Suffian Commission there were other Commissions and Committees that were appointed by the Government. They were:

- The Aziz Commission on Teachers' Remuneration and Terms and Conditions of Service, 1971;
- The Harun Commission on the Remuneration and Terms and Conditions of Service of Employees in Statutory and Local Authorities, 1973;
- The Sheikh Abdullah Committee on the Remuneration and Terms and Conditions of Service of Members of the Armed Forces, 1971;
- The Aziz Committee on Judges' Remuneration and Terms and Conditions of Service, 1971; and
- Report of the Special Cabinet Committee on Salary Revision for the Public Sector (1991) resulting in the New Remuneration System, 1992; and
- Malaysia Remuneration System, 2002.

That these Commissions and Committees used mainly the Tun Suffian mould as the basis is testimony of the pragmatic and visionary quality of the basic principles which Tun Suffian and his Commission recommended. Subsequent salary revisions made by the Cabinet Committee adhered to these basic principles with some modifications to adapt to suit changing conditions. There is no doubt that the Tun Suffian mould would continue to form the basis of the pay structure of public sector employees for a long time to come, in particular, in terms of its pragmatic and philosophical thrust.

The basic principles proposed by the Suffian Commission were sound, solid and pragmatic. However, the quantum proposed in specific cases did not meet the expectations of the different categories of employees. This controversy still rages on

in the corridors of power even today. Many, even retired officers who were affected, feel that this was due to the rigid, almost puritanical, line adopted by the Indian Member of the Commission. The late Tan Sri Harun Hashim, former Federal Court Judge and himself Chairman of the Harun Salaries Commission, while writing about Tun Suffian in his weekly column in *The New Straits Times* some years ago more or less echoed the same sentiments. He said, no doubt with tongue in cheek, that the first meal that the Indian Member had after arriving in Kuala Lumpur was a banana leaf meal in Ceylon Restaurant in Malay Street which cost him only one Malaysian Ringgit!

The truth of the matter is that Tun Suffian and his Commission, as already noted, had to work within severe financial constraints. A preliminary study of the Suffian Report revealed that it would cost a whopping one hundred million ringgit, which the Treasury under the jurisdiction of the frugal then Minister of Finance, Tun Tan Siew Sin, claimed the Government could not afford. As a result, the implementation of the Suffian Report was shelved for a while much to the ire of the Trade Unions and their members. Continuous pressure mounted by the Trade Unions in a relentless fashion led to the subsequent implementation of the Suffian Report.

One controversy has refused to fade away and continues to rage unabated even today and that is the reduction in the maximum amount of pension payable from two-thirds, as previously, to half of final salary. The rationale for this was that pensions calculated on the new clean-wage salaries would inflate the Pensions Bill to a level that the Government could not afford. This premise is being hotly contested by many pensioners, especially those who retired on relatively small salaries, and they still feel outraged. Successive Presidents of the Malaysian Pensioners' Association have appealed to the Government to resolve the plight of those who are in receipt of small pensions. They have urged the Government to determine a reasonable quantum to alleviate the hardship faced by these pensioners whose plight continues to be exacerbated by creeping inflation and old age.

What Tun Suffian's inner feelings on this matter were can never be known although the controversy must have anguished him. However, in fairness, it must be said that the fears of the Commission of the Pensions Bill becoming inflated to a level that the Government could not afford if the previous two-thirds maximum limit was retained has now been amply justified. The Government, to its dismay, now finds that its pensions liability has soared to nearly nineteen billion Malaysian Ringgit per annum and would continue to increase to even higher levels! This might explain the reason why Tun Suffian had continued to maintain a discreet silence on the matter.

Despite these controversies, the Suffian model has endured and is likely to continue to remain so because of the pragmatic and visionary nature of the principles on which it had been constructed. One shudders what would have happened if an economist or an accountant had headed the Commission! In line with the late Tan Sri Harun Hashim's sense of humour one might observe by way of conclusion that the Indian Member was a mathematician - and a first rate one at that!

Mr. Veloo Saminathan joined the Administrative and Diplomatic Service on 6 August 1958 and retired as Director-General of Local Government, Ministry of Housing and Local Government on 6 August 1988.

ESTABLISHING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING: INVOLVEMENT OF ADS OFFICERS

Dato' Shaari Mohd Noor

It has often been said that Administrative and Diplomatic (ADS) officers are 'generalists', ... '*Jack of all trades, master of none*'. While not disputing the first part of this saying that an ADS officer, by virtue of the nature of his service, is tasked with many and varied forms of management roles in government agencies, it is hard to accept the second part of the saying that he or she is not capable of handling specialised jobs. For example, we have the Treasury and the Economic Planning Unit which have all along been headed by ADS officers with the relevant specialised knowledge. Many ADS officers had brilliantly succeeded in the implementation of public policies introduced by the government.

In the international arena, our Diplomats were well-recognised for their sterling performance, especially in representing our country at the United Nations. All these can be attributed to the fact that the ADS officers possessed one commonality, that is, their very good command of the English language, both written and spoken.

This article is intended to pay tribute to my predecessors who, if not being pioneers, were the prime-movers in establishing public institutions of higher learning in this country.

Except for University of Malaya, which was an off-shoot of the then University of Malaya in Singapore, all public universities came into being on or after 1969, the first being the University of Science, Penang on June 1, 1969 followed by the National University on 18 May 1970. The man who spearheaded these national universities was none other than our former Chief Secretary to the Government and first President of PTD Alumni, the late Tun Abdullah Salleh. He was the first Registrar of the National University and was responsible for successfully charting its course.

When the College of Agriculture was upgraded to be the University of Agriculture in 1973, another senior ADS Officer was to helm it as the first Registrar. He was the late Tan Sri Mahmud Taib, who later went on to be the Director General of the Public Service Department. Likewise, another ADS officer was tasked to be the Registrar of University Technology Malaysia (UTM) when the then Technical College was elevated to be a university. He was the late Dato' Ahmad Badri Mohamed Basir. All the three above-mentioned officers did their utmost to use their administrative

experience and ability in the face of high expectations from the public, coupled with the need to fulfil the wishes for new directions expected of the nation.

The focus of this article is on the development of UTM, as I was directly involved in it. I was seconded from the ADS to the then Technical College, months prior to its elevation to university status. I was to assist the Principal on administrative matters in preparing the College's transition to a university. After UTM was formally established on 14 March 1972, Dato' Ahmad Badri was appointed its first Registrar. While the Vice-Chancellor concentrated on the academic aspects of the new university, the Registrar was involved in recruiting lecturers in Science, Engineering and Architecture. Lecturers in the field of Surveying were recruited later. He travelled to many universities overseas where Malaysian students were doing Post-graduate studies to attract them into serving UTM upon graduation. The incumbent Technical College lecturers, who were then government servants, were absorbed into the university service, though not before they passed a special test conducted by the UTM administration. As the Deputy Registrar, I was tasked to carry out these special tests, as I had the experience in conducting examinations for government officers while in the then Federal Establishment Office.

The most startling achievement by UTM was its boldness to admit students from the then Malay Medium Schools into Diploma courses, and those who qualified could continue to pursue their Degree courses. Although courses in this University were planned to be conducted in Bahasa Malaysia, as was the case in the former Technical College, it turned out to be conducted wholly in English. Actually, it was a blessing as it prepared the students to continue their studies in universities overseas. Accordingly, UTM took the novel step of establishing a language laboratory to intensively coach students in English. In time, they were more or less at par with their fellow students from the English-medium schools.

It was indeed a proud moment when, after a few years, I witnessed for the first time rows of Bumiputra graduates lining up to receive their engineering and architectural scrolls at the UTM's First Convocation. It was also very encouraging to note that a couple of Diploma holders had been offered to do their degree courses in the United Kingdom, especially at the University of Strathclyde and the University of Glasgow. More interesting is the fact that they were admitted straight into the second year.

This article would not be complete without the inclusion of by far the most illustrious ADS Officer, Tun Arshad Ayub, who helped to move an institute of higher learning from one stage to another. He became the first Principal of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) College, after it was elevated from the Rural Industrial Development

Authority (RIDA) College after the First Bumiputra Economic Congress in 1965. Tun Arshad Ayub contributed a lot to the College's expansion and was dubbed the 'Architect' of MARA. When MARA College was renamed MARA Institute of Technology, Tun Arshad Ayub was appointed its first Principal and in 2000 was conferred the title '*Tokoh MARA*'. At 92, the still sprightly Tun Arshad Ayub is still the Pro-Chancellor of the now University Technology MARA (UiTM).

It is safe to conclude that the four senior ADS officers mentioned above have, in the prime of their lives, made significant contributions to the advancement of the nation. It is, therefore, apt when Tan Sri Dato' Sri Sallehuddin Mohamed (President of ALUMNI PTD), in his preface to the book *Service Par Excellence*, quoted from the book *The Malaysian Bureaucracy* by Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad, Norma Mansor and Abdul Kuddus Ahmad that "In view of the extensive powers and prestige enjoyed by the MCS and the fact that many key positions in the bureaucracy are held by its members, including secondment positions in public corporations, the MCS can really be regarded as an elite service".¹

It may be appropriate to add here the fact that the ADS has consistently maintained its stance of neutrality *a la* Westminster and this has earned its elitism. This had been espoused many decades ago by the Report of the London Constitutional Conference, to which our first Chief Secretary to the Government, the late Tun Abdul Aziz bin Haji Abdul Majid, then known as Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister's Department, was a signatory, wherein it is stated that "The first essential for ensuring an efficient administration is the political impartiality of the public service that should be recognised and safeguarded".²

¹ Wan Mansor Abdullah, *Service Par Excellence*, Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad, Kuala Lumpur, 2004, p.viii.

² Ibid, p 345

Dato' Shaari Mohd Noor joined the Administrative and Diplomatic Service on 2 April 1965 and retired as Secretary, Education Service Commission on 10 July 1994.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. POLA SINGH, AUTHOR OF 'MY REFLECTIONS OF LIFE'

Editorial Team

'My Reflections of Life' is a book that characterises the typical Malaysian life touching on issues that affect the man on the street - matters of the heart and mind which is centred on life. It is a compilation of articles written over the years by Dr. Pola Singh, a former PTD officer whose last posting was as Director General with Maritime Institute of Malaysia. He writes from varied perspectives based on the different hats he wore over a passage of time. This coffee table book brings his stories alive through the colourful pictures and underlying messages. 'Perspectives' talks to the author, Dr. Pola Singh.

Dr Pola Singh, 70 has not slowed down in life. He is a familiar face in Taman Tun Dr Ismail (TTDI) where he serves as an Executive Council member of the TTDI Residents' Association. He is the Co-founder of 'Friends of Bukit Kiara' and in the process has become a green lung champion for Bukit Kiara. He assists at a Sikh-based Soup Kitchen in feeding the poor and homeless every Friday. In terms of keeping healthy, he not only hikes up Bukit Kiara every other day but continues his Hash House Harriers runs to keep him on the go. He brings with him an illustrious background having served as the Director General of Maritime Institute of Malaysia, the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta and the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department.

The following are excerpts from Reflection's interview with Dr Pola Singh:

How did your writing journey start?

I always admired people who could present their thoughts in a simple yet appealing manner. So appealing, that their work gets published. And so from young, I dreamt of seeing my own writing in print too.

My first piece appeared in the New Straits Times as a 'Letter to the Editor' back in the early 1970's. When I first saw it, I was overjoyed! I was so elated, that I bought three copies of the newspaper and read my 'masterpiece' over and over again.

As Confucius aptly described – 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step', and so my writing journey started with the publication of this maiden letter.

In the 1970's and while having a full-time job, I wrote for the papers every now and then. I got my break as a part-time stringer for the Sports Desk of the Malay Mail. I learnt by observing how sub-editors would effortlessly refine my draft into an exciting and persuasive piece. It made me realise that constant practice was as important, as our flair for writing.

My writing passage took a break in the late 1980s as I focussed on my Ph.D degree in the United States. Though I never had a flair in academic-type writing (as it appeals mainly to academicians who are in a world of their own), I gained another perspective of writing from the lens of associate and full professors.

My 7-year stint at the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister's Department was a game changer. My writing skills improved by leaps and bounds. Interestingly enough, my 'big boss' was Dr Mahathir. There was plenty of writing to be done this time but they were of the esoteric and boring kind, at least to most people. There were many policy, social and economic development papers as well as memorandums to be prepared in quick turnaround time and on a very regular basis. Little did I realise that slowly but surely, I continued to fortify my writing skills. The training was excellent as it sharpened my mind in differentiating the wheat from the chaff.

My subsequent years at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta made me what I am today. It was a challenge to work in an international organisation comprising personnel from 10 culturally-different member countries. My earlier stint at EPU indeed put me in an advantageous position especially when it came to preparing urgent policy papers that could be easily understood and internalised by Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials of the 10 member countries of ASEAN.

Tell us about your book

It is a compilation of my articles written over the years in the newspapers. It comes in a coffee book form where you will find short stories accompanied by lots of colourful pictures. I started off with my roots, family and values which had defined the person I have become over the years.

The chapters thereafter characterise our typical Malaysian life, which we are familiar with and can easily relate to. Remember Lat's cartoon? Well, the same Malaysian content, but with a different twist. I attempt to capture them in a candid yet insightful and witty manner for my audience's ease of reading.

The title of my articles actually provides a flavour to its story and moral values. Some of the headings include:

- *Savour each day as you will never know if it could be your last*
- *Making time for health and family*
- *Giving generously and blessings will follow*
- *A Sikh wedding steeped in splendour*
- *The praise factor in the Asian community where we need to learn to give praise to others during their living years*
- *The 'Kay pohchee' syndrome especially during accidents*
- *Don't take peace for granted*
- *The movie 'Redha' opens our eyes and teaches us about autism*

What motivated you to author this book?

I retired a few years ago. Having more time on hand, I have returned to fulfil my passion. However, instead of writing on serious economic and social issues, I choose to reflect and write on life experiences, friendships, challenges, imbalances, beliefs and values. Essentially, covering issues that affect the man on the street – which really matters.

Through my writing and with justice and fair play in mind, I attempt to be a voice for the voiceless and give faith to those seemingly 'without hope'. I also use my writing to address and provide solutions to issues facing the nation on racial unity, corruption, environmental issues and social issues such as ageing gracefully.

Authoring a book has been an item on my dream list and bucket list for a long time now. I have been writing articles my whole life. Along this writing path, I told myself that authoring a book would be a natural progression and hence I set this goal.

Where do you derive your inspiration to write?

In the beautiful course of life itself and through my various capacities. Life is after all a University. From a *kampung* (village) boy in Malacca to a university student in Kuala Lumpur and then a PTD officer upon graduation. From a sports enthusiast, to a green advocate, to a social community worker and a senior citizen. From a devoted son, to a father, to a doting grandfather.

I am blessed to wear many hats and hence I write from those dimensions and perspectives through a passage of time.

Describe your writing experience

It has been a humbling and fulfilling writing journey. For the man on the street, I humbly endeavour to inspire and encourage faith and hope when the road ahead seems

tough, having been at crossroads many times before. I delve on the Malaysian idiosyncrasies and how we can feasibly make a better change in our lives.

With justice and level playing field in mind, I respectfully strive to be a voice to bring issues often discussed among colleagues and friends at the mamak shop. Where possible, I attempt to use my writing to address and provide resolutions to challenges facing the nation, for example on racial unity and environmental issues, drawing from my exposure in policy formulation and implementation. Writing has become a purposeful journey - to make a difference, where possible.

I write on issues that affect the man on the street – matters of the heart, mind and body centred on life, each with an underlying message.

I am grateful and thankful to my readers for connecting to my stories, all these years.

I have been pleasantly stopped at parks, roadside, shopping malls and weddings by strangers who tell me they have read my pieces in the papers and support my views. It feels good knowing that we Malaysians speak the same language, share the same value system and echo the same concerns. The beauty of it all is – the commonality that we share. We all have our family, friends and nation's best interest at heart.

What is your advice to aspiring writers?

I derive great joy from writing and bringing issues often discussed at the dining table to the forefront. My humble advice to those desiring to write is simple – read widely and keep writing, even if your piece does not get printed. One fine day, it will. Your belief will take you there. The gridlock of words that seemingly get stuck in your head will soon unravel and gush out effortlessly like a river rushing to the sea! Practice, of course, makes it perfect.

Before you know it, you will have an informal Fan Club following your column or writing.

Next, know your target audience and their interest, so your writing will resonate and appeal to them. Write in a simple and reader-friendly way using words that are easily understood. This way, you will connect with your readers at ease and voila, you will have a faithful following! As an added advantage, take up photography as a hobby as it would go a long way in enhancing and painting your articles. Pictures, after all, speak a thousand words.

Indeed, writing is fulfilling. I derive much pleasure and joy in writing. As a person, I am contented materially, emotionally and spiritually. I acknowledge that I have more than I need and I thank God for his abundant blessings.

Dr. Pola Singh s/o Tara Singh joined the Administrative and Diplomatic Service on 4 Sept 1972. He went on optional retirement effective 4 January 2000, his last post being Deputy Director, Energy Section, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department.

SEBERAT MATA MEMANDANG

Haji Sufian Taimon

Tuah Ayam Nampak Di Kaki
Tuah Manusia Sukar Diketahui
Walau Usia Sudah Tinggi
Mahu Masuk Perkhidmatan PTD

Apa Dirajuk Padi Di Ladang
Entahkan Masak Entahkan Tidak
Apa Dirajuk Jawatan Di Seberang Lautan
Entah Serasi Entah Tidak

Arahan Pertukaran

Suasana di pejabat Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (JPA), Tingkat 9, Bangunan United Malayan Banking (UMBC), Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin, Kuala Lumpur, seperti biasa sahaja. Senyap dan agak sunyi. Maklumlah masa kemuncak, jam lebih kurang 12.00 tengah hari, masing-masing pegawai dan staf khusyuk menghadapi tugas masing-masing di bilik masing-masing seorang sebuah.

Tiba-tiba kedengaran ketukan di pintu. Budak Pejabat memberi khabar bahawa Tuan Ketua Bahagian ingin berjumpa saya. Dengan serta-merta saya bergegas keluar lantas menemui Tuan Pengarah di tiga tingkat, di atas. Selepas membalas salam, katanya, *'Are you OK to go to Melbourne, Student Affairs Department, in Victoria, Australia?'* katanya tegas dan jelas.

Saya terkedu dan kaku. Baru berada di JPA, setahun jagung, saya sudah ditukar ke Jabatan lain, jawatan yang saya tidak impikan sedikit pun, malahan saya sangat terpegun. Rasanya dakwat cap jari baru hendak kering.

'Alright. You go now. I think you are the right person to go. You were an English teacher and was a Principal of a Secondary School. The job is dealing with students.' Tanpa banyak berfikir, *'Yes Sir. I wish to go.'* Saya menjawab tiba-tiba, seolah-olah seperti saya sudah hilang pertimbangan. Anak seluang hendak berenang ke lautan. *"Good. Go and take your file now. Bring it here."* katanya lagi.

Diminitkan dalam fail saya, “Ditukarkan mengisi Jawatan Pegawai Penempatan, Jabatan Penuntut Malaysia (JPM), Melbourne, secepat mungkin.” Ia terus berkata ‘*Pass the file to your boss now.*’ Saya diberi masa sebulan untuk membuat persiapan dan harus melapor diri untuk bertugas pada 1 September, 1978 di JPM, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Masam-Masam Manis Baru Tiba Di Negara Orang

Seperti kata orang-orang tua, tidak kenal maka tidak cinta, tidak biasa maka kita agak mula menderita. Dengan tiga orang anak, yang sulung Mirza Safri, 17 tahun, yang tengah Saiful Azli, 15 tahun dan yang bongsu, Seri Suniza berusia 13 tahun saya ke Melbourne. Mereka yang terlonjak-lonjak tatkala bapa mendapat arahan berpeluang bertugas di luar negara, tiada banyak berbicara, hanya mengikut sahaja ke mana ibu bapa mereka pergi, tanpa banyak berbicara. ‘Home sweet home’, hujan emas di negara orang, hujan batu di negeri sendiri; akan tetap memilih negara sendiri. Tentunya kami sama seperti rusa masuk kampung. Cuaca sejuk, mencubit dan menggigil sampai ketulang. Lantaran itu, hubungan kami bertambah rapat dan amat terasa di hati rasa kemesraan di antara kami.

Bagaimanapun, kami tetap teruja demi melihat dan berada di negara orang, dan berazam untuk meraih dan membuat yang terbaik akhirnya nanti, demi negara dan kemajuan diri. Kami dapat melihat dengan jelas dan nyata lampu yang menyala diterowong di sebelah sana. Itulah pegangan kami, sebagai satu suntikan motivasi.

Dewan Malaysia

Mengendalikan tugas-tugas Konsular adalah seronok dan mencabar. Pelajar tajaan tidak ramai pada ketika itu. Walau bagaimanapun, tugas-tugas penempatan dan kebajikan pelajar tidak kurang mencabar.

Untuk lebih berjinak-jinak dengan pelajar, saya jadualkan tiga hari dalam seminggu untuk berada di Dewan-dewan Pelajar Universiti dan bagi pelajar A-Level, saya mendatangi rumah mereka dan sering bermakan malam bersama mereka. Isteri saya sebanyak sedikit menunjuk ajar resipi masakan yang popular orang-orang Melayu di Malaysia setiap kali menemui mereka.

Pada ketika itu, ‘education’ di Australia percuma. Bermakna seorang pelajar hanya perlu menampung tempat tinggal sahaja untuk melanjutkan pelajaran tinggi. Saya mohon JPA menghantar pelajar tajaan lebih ramai ke Victoria, selepas sahaja mereka menduduki SPM, kerana kemasukan ke Universiti di Victoria mula pada September.

Tanpa SPM pun mereka boleh masuk belajar ke A-Level dan merebut peluang terus masuk ke Universiti-universiti yang unggul di Victoria, seperti Universiti Monash, LaTrobe, Melbourne dan RMIT di pelbagai bidang termasuk Perubatan, Kejuruteraan, Senibina dan lain-lain.

Keakraban saya dengan pegawai-pegawai pelajaran membolehkan pelajar-pelajar tajaan, khususnya yang belajar di sekolah-sekolah yang terbaik, bersaing dengan pelajar-pelajar tempatan. Tiadalah lagi mereka bersekolah di *Migrant Area* dan penempatan mereka di sekolah-sekolah baik membakar semangat untuk belajar dengan lebih tekun bagi merebut tempat-tempat di Fakulti Perubatan dan Pergigian yang amat terhad.

Saya dapati ramai pelajar suka tinggal jauh di *suburb* dan tinggal beramai-ramai. Saya merasa kurang senang melihat pelajar yang begitu kerana pada suatu ketika nanti mereka akan memegang jawatan-jawatan tinggi dan menjadi pemimpin, sedangkan mereka masih dalam proses pembinaan personaliti, watak dan harga diri seperti di Tanah Air. Sebahagiannya memang suka berkumpul-kumpul dan sebahagiannya lagi ingin menyimpan wang untuk dihantar ke kampung ataupun untuk membeli barangan persendirian. Tidak kurang juga di antara mereka yang suka tinggal sebumbung bercampuran. Bagi menangani gejala-gejala ini, saya memohon ditimbang semula elaan sara hidup mereka supaya mereka mendapat rumah-rumah kediaman yang lebih selesa dan berdekatan dengan bandar. Pelajar-pelajar baharu A-Level sukar mencari tempat tinggal sewaktu baru sampai kerana jumlahnya ramai. Mereka ditumpangkan di rumah pelajar-pelajar senior buat sementara waktu dan peraturan seperti ini sungguh kurang senang kepada pihak pelajar baru itu mahupun pelajar senior yang ditumpangi.

Saya telah mencadangkan supaya Kerajaan membeli bangunannya sendiri, bukan hanya untuk pelajar-pelajar baharu bahkan pelajar-pelajar senior yang minat. Juga bagi pelawat-pelawat Tanah Air yang melancong atau datang untuk melawat anak-anak mereka. Bangunan itu nanti boleh dijadikan forum atau tempat bertemu bagi pelajar-pelajar Malaysia di Victoria atau dari tempat-tempat lain. Idea yang saya syorkan ini mendapat tempat dihati pelawat-pelawat yang tidak putus-putus datang dari Malaysia. Teristimewa pegawai Kerajaan, kerana mereka menginsafi keperluan dan kegunaannya '*multi-purpose and beyond the eyes can see*'. Insyallah, tanpa banyak bicara, kelulusan untuk membeli sebuah rumah di Melbourne diluluskan bagi pengurusan dan penempatan pelajar. Bangunan itu yang beralamat K4, High St. Windson, Victoria 3181, Australia sedang berfungsi sepenuhnya dan mencapai tujuannya.

Hari-Hari Kebesaran

Hari Kebangsaan negara-negara diraikan setiap tahun secara besar-besaran di Victoria. Pada kebiasaannya Hari-hari Kebangsaan ini sangat popular. Tidak terkecuali negara kita, Malaysia.

Bagi Malaysia, pada setiap 31hb Ogos, saya membantu Pejabat Konsular menganjurkan sambutan Hari Kebangsaan Malaysia. Sebagai Tuan Rumah, saya menjemput semua Duta yang ada di Melbourne dan juga orang-orang Kenamaan di Victoria. His Excellency, Tuan Premier Victoria akan mengucapkan Selamat Bahagia kepada DYMM Yang DiPertuan Agong, dan saya menimbal balas melafazkan “To The Queen Elizabeth II of England”. Dewan bergema dengan lantunan lafaz kata-kata yang mulus dan suci itu dari para hadirin.

Dalam keraian seperti ini, ramai bertanyakan hal-hal Malaysia dan ingin melancong. Saya mengambil kesempatan memperkenalkan Negara dengan lebih dekat kepada para tetamu disamping berbual mesra dengan Orang-orang Besar dan Orang-orang Kenamaan Tempatan. Semoga mereka terus meminati Malaysia.

Peristiwa-Peristiwa Yang Menusuk Hati

Pelajar Membuat Rayuan

Pada suatu malam, semasa menghadap rezeki santapan malam, penulis didatangi seorang pelajar perubatan tahun empat mengadu beliau menerima surat “exclusion” atas kegagalan dalam matapelajaran. Ia tidak merasa segan atau silu mengakui kealpaannya lantas mohon saya merayu kepada professor. Pelajar berjanji akan belajar lebih rajin nanti. Saya teringat ia pernah menerima surat ibunya sakit kira-kira setengah tahun yang lalu.

Di kalangan mereka di sini, kita mesti pandai ‘to defend and argue’. Mereka mudah cair teristimewa dalam hal-hal perasaan atau emosi seperti putus cinta atau kerunsingan tertentu seperti ibu sakit dan lain-lain. Saya bawa pelajar itu berjumpa dengan professor yang berkenaan dan menerangkan keadaannya. Rayuannya berjaya.

Pelajar Sakit Perut

Pada suatu tengah malam saya dapat panggilan telefon seorang budak perempuan sakit perut yang tidak tertahan-tahan. Pelajar itu baru sampai tiga bulan yang lalu. Isteri saya masuk ke biliknya. Didapati ia diserang sakit senggugut. Dia diberi minum air

suam dan diurut perutnya perlahan-lahan dengan minyak panas, sedikit demi sedikit penyakit yang dihadapi lerai dan ia dibawa ke hospital.

Perayaan-Perayaan Hari Krismas, Tahun Baharu, Easter Holiday Dan Anzac Day

Hari-hari seperti ini sangat diraikan penduduk setempat. Saya mengambil pendekatan positif dan hadir suami isteri setiap kali dijemput dengan full dress yang dipanggil Monkey Jacket. Para jemputan biasanya dihidangkan dengan 'refreshments'. Kami bergaul dan berinteraksi dengan diplomat-diplomat dari negara-negara lain serta orang kenamaan tempatan. Ini sangat menguntungkan negara-negara yang diwakili wakilnya.

Persandingan Pengantin Baharu

Inilah tugas yang paling menggemparkan apabila sepasang pelajar meminta keredhaan dan izin untuk disandingkan di rumah saya sebagai kemuncak ijab kabulnya sebagai suami isteri, setelah mendapat kelulusan dari pihak-pihak yang berkaitan. Majlis dibanjiri oleh sahabat-sahabat, berduyun-duyun dan berbondong-bondong mereka hadir. Perayaan lebih meriah dari di kampung. Hanya kompiang tidak ada.

Perayaan Hari Raya Puasa

Inilah satu-satunya hari yang sangat dinantikan bukan hanya oleh saya, bahkan pelajar-pelajar sekalian dan juga orang-orang tempatan yang menjadi sahabat saya. Sebagai tuan rumah saya menentukan makanan dan juadah pada hari itu mirip seperti di kampung. Rendang dan pulut menjadi hidangan. Lemang sahaja yang tidak ada. Memang meriah pada hari itu, lebih meriah dan ramai lagi yang datang dari hari-hari berbuka puasa; 4 hari yang diadakan oleh pelajar sekiranya disatukan. Bagi menanganai hari yang serba indah ini, kami sekeluarga sepakat bagi kelangsungan dan kelancarannya.

Jemputan termasuk layanan para hadirin dikelolakan oleh anak sulung Min. Hidangan dan hiasan oleh anak yang tengah Ai. Dan tokok tambah makanan di meja, anak saya yang bongsu, Seri. Majlis terus menerus berlangsung dari pagi jam lapan pagi hingga sembilan setengah malam.

Buku tetamu menunjukkan kedatangan seramai tiga ratus orang. Seluruh keluarga penat tidak terperi tetapi kepuasannya tidak terkira juga. Itulah persembahan Rumah Terbuka kami.

Arahan Pulang Ke Tanah Air

Bumi mana yang tidak kena hujan, dan lautan mana tidak bergelora. Tempoh tiga tahun tiba pada 1 Oktober 1981 dan saya diarah melaporkan diri di JPA. Saya memohon arahan pulang dilanjutkan sehingga 31 Disember 1981. Namun, ia tidak diluluskan. Pertukaran pada pertengahan tahun seperti itu amat-amat merumitkan persekolahan anak-anak. Mahupun ditinggalkan di Melbourne, terlalu sukar untuk mendapat penginapan. Andainya dibawa terus bersama pulang, peluang persekolahan tidak mudah diperolehi. Saya dilanda dilema.

Sebagai pendokong kata-kata taat setia “Saya Yang Menurut Perintah”, kami bersiap sedia untuk pulang sekeluarga, datang panggilan dari Tuan Pengarah JPM Sydney, menyatakan pertukaran pulang saya ditunda sehingga 1 Januari 1982. Tidak disedari penundaan tarikh kepulangan mengundang sedikit persepsi di pihak Bahagian Perkhidmatan JPA tentang adanya campur tangan orang ketiga mengenai tarikh kepulangan saya.

Saya diminta hadir di JPA dan diminta memberi penerangan jika adanya orang ketiga mohon tarikh kepulangan itu ditunda. Saya diberitahu perilaku itu terang-terang bertentangan dengan BAB D Tatatertib yang menetapkan bahawa seorang pegawai awam yang terlibat boleh diambil tindakan.

Setelah diberitahu orang yang ketiga itu sebenarnya, saya mula memahami bagaimana ia boleh berlaku walaupun saya tidak minta pun. Saya mohon maaf dan memberitahu bahawa saya pernah menceritakan perihal kepulangan saya itu kepada seorang adik yang secara kebetulan mengenali orang ketiga itu. Peristiwa itu amat menyedihkan saya, tetapi saya tetap berpuas hati.

Refleksi

Persis seperti citra yang diuraikan tugas pegawai penempatan di luar negara itu rencam, caca marba dan tiada bertepi. Justeru, ia memerlukan satu personaliti yang menjadi pilihan. Kepintaran berkomunikasi tersulam dengan penghayatan yang dalam adalah asas utama dan sangat relevan untuk meraih kejayaan dan kelangsungan usaha kerja. Mempunyai sikap hati terbuka dan merasai semua tugas harus digarap seperti ‘kepunyaan’ sendiri terpenting. Mempunyai sifat-sifat kepimpinan dan punya penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris yang baik dan sifat sayangkan pelajar diutamakan adalah wajib. Sanggup mengadakan sesi “tutorial” apabila diperlukan. Saya mempunyai seolah-olah sebuah lagi pejabat di rumah bagi menampung pelajar-pelajar yang ingin melawat dan berkunjung hormat teristimewa pada hujung minggu.

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PUDU PUDA DI BARILOCHE: MISI DIPLOMATIK KE ARGENTINA

Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Yusof Hitam

Pada bulan Mei 1988, setelah selesai Perhimpunan Agung Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu (PBB) di New York, saya dan Wakil Tetap Kuwait, Uganda dan Kuasa Usaha Samoa Barat, mendapat persetujuan daripada Kementerian Luar Argentina untuk melawat negara itu selama seminggu. Permintaan itu saya buat selaku Pengerusi Kelompok Negara Asia di PBB. Pada waktu itu *credentials* saya termasuk memegang tugas Timbalan Pengerusi, Perhimpunan Agung PBB bagi penggal 1987-1988, dan seorang pengasas Persatuan Kebangsaan Wakil Tetap Ke PBB bersama dengan Wakil Tetap Arab Saudi, India, Argentina dan Hungary. Tiap seorang daripada kami mempunyai misi sendiri untuk pergi bertemu dengan Menteri Luar Argentina di Buenos Aires. Begitu juga di pihak Wakil Tetap dan Kementerian Luar Argentina. Mereka mahu menerima kami bagi mendapatkan sokongan kepada dasar Argentina di PBB.

Beginilah cara Wakil Tetap di PBB melaksanakan tugas, dan begitu juga halnya bagi Perwakilan negara dalam badan-badan antarabangsa yang lain, iaitu dengan bersahabat dan menjalin kerjasama dengan lain-lain Perwakilan bagi melaksanakan misi masing-masing, mahu pun bagi tujuan antarabangsa bersama. Bagi kami di PBB New York, usaha demikian kadangkala rumit dan merunsingkan jika tidak mendapat sokongan daripada Wisma Putra, atau pun dari Kementerian lain yang berkepentingan. Kelemahan sedemikian sering berlaku, terutama dalam hal-hal yang tidak dianggap mendesak atau mendasar kepada pertimbangan politik dalam negeri. Berlainan halnya pada banyak negara lain, di mana dasar luar dan dasar dalam negeri selalunya tegas diserasikan baik dalam percakapan mahu pun perbuatan di pentas antarabangsa. Tetapi bagi wakil-wakil Malaysia, tidak jarang kita melihat dan mendengar anggota delegasi nasional daripada parti-parti pembangkang yang menghadiri persidangan antarabangsa menyuarakan pendirian parti masing-masing. Dari sudut susila, perbuatan demikian amatlah biadab kepada keutuhan Negara dan Bangsa. Lainlah jika Persidangan itu tidak bersifat "antara bangsa-bangsa" mengikut konvensyen sebelum dan setelah Perjanjian Perhubungan Antarabangsa Vienna.

Dalam tulisan ini, saya ingin berkongsi cerita tentang misi saya ke Buenos Aires secara ringkas. Asal usul yang membawa saya melakukan misi ini bermula dalam tahun 1983 dan 1984 apabila saya melaksanakan tugas sebagai Ketua Pengarah Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Malaysia di Wisma Putra. Pada masa itu, Pemerintahan Barisan Nasional dalam strategi perindustrian berkeinginan meningkatkan

kedudukan Malaysia sebagai 'Ekonomi Harimau'. Kemajuan demikian memerlukan sokongan politik dan ekonomi antarabangsa yang luas dan cergas. Lapangan yang ampuh untuk 'menjual diri' bagi maksud itu adalah di PBB di New York, dan Persidangan *Uruguay Rounds of World Trade* yang berlaku di Geneva, Switzerland, yang ditaja dalam pada tahun 1982 dengan tujuan meluaskan perdagangan dan industri antarabangsa ke tahap yang lebih luas daripada yang telah tercapai oleh *Tokyo Round*.

Setelah meninjau sokongan daripada teman-teman dari ASEAN, serta pegawai-pegawai tinggi dan kesediaan jabatan-jabatan berkaitan di Malaysia, saya dan Ketua Setiausaha Wisma Putra membuat keputusan untuk meminta persetujuan daripada Pemerintah BN untuk menegakkan nama dan pimpinan Malaysia pada lakaran antarabangsa dalam tiga lapangan, iaitu: membuka inisiatif bagi meneraju 'Persidangan Antarabangsa bagi Mencegah Salahguna Dadah' pada tahun 1987, 'Menduduki Kerusi-giliran Dalam Majlis Keselamatan' di PBB, New York, bagi penggal 1989-90, dan "Menjadi Tuan Rumah Bagi Persidangan Kemuncak Negara-Negara Komomwel ' pada tahun 1989.

Pada mulanya, semua cadangan ini tidak diperkenankan oleh Pemerintah. Alhamdulillah, kesemua kesukaran itu berjaya diatasi untuk dimulakan tindakan diplomasi dengan usaha diplomasi yang amat luar biasa dan getir di PBB, Latin Amerika, Timur Tengah, Asia dan Afrika. Persidangan antarabangsa bagi mencegah salahguna dadah telah berjaya dilaksanakan oleh Perdana Menteri Malaysia dalam tahun 1987. Pada waktu saya ke Argentina, inisiatif kedua sedang saya lakukan. Inisiatif ketiga masih dalam persiapan. Bagi tujuan inisiatif kedua, misi saya adalah untuk menyimpulkan sokongan dan undi daripada negara-negara Amerika Latin, yang perasaan mereka telah tercalar kerana tersinggung oleh kemenangan Malaysia meneraju persidangan salahguna dadah di Vienna.

Pandangan sepi yang mula-mula timbul dalam Pemerintahan BN terhadap ketiga-tiga inisiatif itu adalah kerana masalah intra-parti dan bukan kerana strategi itu. Perkara yang berkaitan amat sensitive, dan saya tidak bercadang untuk menceritakan di sini.

Misi saya di Buenos Aires adalah untuk melaksanakan inisiatif kedua, untuk mendapatkan sokongan daripada Argentina dan Negara Latin Amerika kepada pencalonan Malaysia untuk menduduki Kerusi-giliran dalam Majlis Keselamatan PBB bagi penggal 1989-90. Kemungkinan misi ini berhasil cukup baik kerana pada waktu itu Argentina sedang memimpin *Mercado Comun del Sur* (MERCOSUR), iaitu *Southern Common Market*, satu pakatan kerjasama ekonomi antara Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay dan Venezuela. Argentina inginkan Malaysia dengan pengaruhnya menyokong kedudukan Argentina di dalam *International Atomic Energy Agency*

(IAEA) di Vienna. Saya sedia memberikan sokongan Malaysia jika Argentina dan 5 negara MERCOSUR setuju mengundi dipihak Malaysia dalam bidaan Kerusi Majlis Keselamatan bagi penggal 1989-90. Lebih lagi jika Argentina sedia membawa Negara Latin yang lain bersama.

Kedudukan Malaysia untuk menang pencalonan itu cukup baik kerana inilah kali pertama Malaysia mencalonkan diri untuk menduduki kerusi di Majlis Keselamatan itu bersendirian dan bagi sepenuh penggal. Kali terakhir negara menduduki Kerusi-giliran di Majlis itu adalah pada tahun 1960 apabila Datuk Ramani mendudukinya secara berkongsi, dan hanya bagi separuh masa satu tahun. Juga, pada kali ini, sebagai Timbalan Pengerusi Perhimpunan Agung PBB bagi 1987-88, saya adalah seorang daripada peneraju Perhimpunan Agung itu. Yang tidak kurang penting adalah kerana persahabatan saya dengan Setiausaha Bahagian kepada Setiausaha Agung PBB yang mewakili Amerika Syarikat. Tidak pernah pembida kepada Kerusi-giliran di Majlis Keselamatan menang tanpa ikhsan wakil Amerika dalam Sekretariat PBB. Kebetulan, dia rapat dengan saya kerana dia memerlukan bantuan saya melindungi pendirian Amerika berkaitan bayaran yuran tahunan Amerika kepada PBB yang hangat dipersoalkan oleh banyak negara, terutama dari Asia dan Latin Amerika. Pada masa itu, saya menjalankan tugas Pengerusi Perhimpunan Agung kerana pemegangnya, Menteri Luar Bangladesh, terpaksa bercuti selama satu bulan kerana aral politik dan perundangan di atas dirinya. Setiausaha Rendah Amerika itu berjanji dengan saya bahawa Amerika tidak akan pecahkan sokongan negara-negara yang akan mengundi dipihak Malaysia. Maka lobi saya hampir selesai kecuali mendapatkan sokongan undi dari pada Latin Amerika.

Pada hari selepas tiba di Buenos Aires, kami bertemu dengan pegawai tinggi Kementerian Luar Negeri Argentina. Kami diberi taklimat agak terperinci tentang peranan Argentina untuk memelihara keamanan di Amerika Selatan bersama negara-negara Latin dan juga Amerika Syarikat. Satu daripada caranya adalah dengan mencegah penggunaan persenjataan nuklear di benua Amerika Selatan dan juga dengan menghapuskan sisa bahan nuklear yang digunakan pada ekonomi dan industry setempat. Kemudian kami diminta menceritakan pendirian pada hal-hal penting bagi negara sendiri.

Saya telah menjelaskan bahawa Malaysia, seperti Argentina, menentang penggunaan kuasa nuklear dibina dan digunakan sebagai alat peperangan, tetapi tidak menolak menjana serta menggunakan tenaga nuklear bagi tujuan pembangunan pertanian dan industry serta lain-lain kegunaan secara aman. Kesan yang saya maksudkan kepada Argentina adalah Perwakilan Malaysia menyokong usaha dan pencalonan Argentina dalam IAEA di Vienna.

Bagi memenuhi kedatangan rombongan di Argentina, kami telah dibawa melihat Loji Nuklear di Bariloche di Bahagian San Carlos de Bariloche di dataran Banjaran Andes, sebelah utara Argentina, dan kemudian ke Mar del Plata di selatan Buenos Aires.

Keesokan hari kami dibawa dengan van ke lapangan terbang dalam negeri, kira-kira 40 kilometer di barat laut Buenos Aires. Perjalannya agak selesa melalui perkampungan dan bandar kecil. Suasananya tidak begitu rancak kerana musim gugur sudah mula tiba dan hawanya sudah agak sejuk. Tanah ladang kelihatan kering, dan ada penduduk yang menunggang kuda di tepi jalan dan di perkampungan. Kediaman mereka agak jauh antara satu dengan yang lain. Kecuali satu-dua, saya tidak melihat gereja di tepi jalan.

Penumpang penerbangan ke Bariloche tidak ramai, mungkin kerana pada musim gugur bandar itu lebih sejuk daripada cuaca di lembangan sungai di Buenos Aires. Tapi yang mengasyikkan saya, apabila kapal Boeing 737 itu terbang ke arah selatan menuju ke semenanjung Patagonia sebelum berpusing ke arah utara menuju Banjaran Andes, saya melihat dengan jelas dua baris peparitan yang amat lebar dan panjang yang berisi timbunan. Saya tanya pada pegawai Argentina apakah peparitan itu. Jawabnya, itulah peparitan untuk buangan sisa industry, termasuk sisa bahan nuklear yang sudah digunakan selama lebih 30 tahun. Pada pertanyaan saya kedua, dia menjelaskan bahawa peparitan itu dibuat di situ kerana tempat itu tidak ada penduduk dan amat sejuk serta merupakan kawasan yang tandus.

Setelah satu jam terbang, pesawat kami mendarat di bandar Bariloche. Hampir sepi keadaannya. Tapi pegawai Argentina sudah menunggu untuk membawa kami ke hotel tumpangan. Kami dilayan amat mesra oleh pegawai negeri dan pekerja hotel. Kebanyakan mereka boleh berbahasa Inggeris sedikit sebanyak. Saya juga melihat ada orang asal Mayan yang memakai pakaian asli mereka. Tapi mereka menggunakan bahasa Sepanyol.

Keesokan harinya rombongan kami dibawa melihat Loji Nuklear di Bariloche. Loji itu kelihatan sederhana, tapi dijaga dengan kawalan rapi. Kami diberi taklimat tentang apa yang dilaksanakan di Loji itu. Katanya Loji itu membuat penyelidikan dan membina isotop bagi kegunaan industry dan pertanian serta barangan lain bagi pihak negara anggota MERCOSUR. Sisa-sisa nuklear dari Loji dibuang di selatan Argentina, dalam peparitan yang saya lihat daripada kapal terbang semalam.

Pada hari berikut, kami dibawa melihat tempat-tempat menarik di sekitar Bandar Bariloche, tempat peranginan tanah rata di banjaran pergunungan Andes. Saya kagum

dengan permandangan tanah tinggi di timur banjaran Andes yang amat megah dengan sejarah Peradaban Bangsa Mayan sebelum diceroboh oleh Sepanyol dan Portugis. Setelah benua Mayan itu terjumpa, ia digeledah oleh Bangsa Sepanyol berikutan pelayaran Christopher Colombus pada tahun 1492, dan oleh Bangsa Portugis setelah Alfonso de Albuquerque mendarat di Bahia dekat muara Sungai Amazon dalam tahun 1521. Albuquerque telah menakluk Kota Melaka dalam tahun 1511 dengan bantuan risik oleh pedagang India di Goa dan di Melaka mulai tahun 1509, terutama daripada kalangan Chetiar yang menguasai perdagangan cengek di Melaka dan Goa pada masa itu.

Pada tengah hari pula, kami dibawa melihat tasik yang bergelar *Tasik Nahue/ Huapi*, nama panggilan orang asal Mayan. Dari jauh tasik itu kelihatan tenang dan bewarna biru kehijauan. Apabila saya menanyakan apa lagi yang istimewa yang akan kami lihat setelah melihat keindahan alam di Bariloche, peneman dari Argentina meminta kita melihat sejenis binatang kecil yang amat istimewa di Argentina yang hanya ada di bahagian San Carlos Bariloche. Ia dipanggil pudu pudu yang masih menduduki tepian Tasik Huapi.

Sekaligus hati saya bertanya kerana teringat kepada Jalan Pudu di Kuala Lumpur. Apakah binatang yang serupa pernah ada di lembah Sg. Kelang pada masa lampau yang membawa Jalan Pudu di Kuala Lumpur itu diberi nama demikian.

Kami dibawa menaiki sebuah bot agak kecil yang hanya dikayuh oleh dua orang pembantu. Kata seorang daripada mereka, bot tidak boleh menggunakan enjin kerana pudu pudu akan sembunyi mendengar bunyi enjin. Kami diam tidak bercakap. Tepi tasik yang disusur tiada siapa yang ada; di atas air penuh dengan kiambang yang bertaut. Tiba-tiba boat kami berhenti dan pengayuhnya menunjukkan kepada dua kepala binatang yang sedang makan daun kiambang dihadapan. Katanya dengan perlahan, itulah pudu pudu. Di tepi tasik dilihat ada lagi beberapa ekor pudu pudu yang tercengang melihat ke arah bot kami, seolah-olah kluatir pada kehadiran kami mendekati pudu-pudu dalam air itu. Lama juga kami melihat dua ekor pudu pudu dalam air itu sebelum boat dikayuh ke tengah Tasik Huapi. Pengayuh bot menceritakan bahawa pudu pudu adalah binatang amat istimewa di Argentina dan dilindungi oleh undang-undang.

Hati saya sukar meninggalkan peristiwa di Tasik Huapi itu. Saya merasa hairan sendiri. Rupa paras pudu pudu dalam air itu hampir sama dengan rupa pelanduk di Tanah Melayu. Saya amat biasa dengan pelanduk kerana Ayah saya pernah membawa pulang pelanduk dan kancil yang masuk dalam perangkapnya di kampung. Tetapi yang terdiri di tebing Tasik Huapi kelihatan juga seperti rusa yang kerdil, dan

tanduknya tidak kelihatan dari jauh. Sejenak saya teringatkan Kuasa Allah yang melihatkan ciptaanNya di mana dan bagaimana sahaja di muka bumi ini. Dengan rasa tenang saya ceritakan persamaan pudu puda dengan pelanduk di Tanah Air dan Kepulauan Melayu kepada teman-teman yang ada bersama saya. Jangan-jangan ada pula orang yang akan berkata bahawa pelanduk adalah bawaan penjajah Inggeris dari Amerika Selatan ke Tanah Melayu, seperti halnya dengan biji getah di Kuala Kangsar.

Setelah dua malam di Bariloche, rombongan kami pulang ke Buenos Aires. Esoknya kami pergi dengan bas melawat pantai pelancungan di Mar del Plata kira-kira dua jam perjalanan ke selatan Buenos Aires. Mula-mula kami dibawa bertemu dengan Datuk Bandar Mar del Plata. Beliau memberi taklimat panjang lebar berkenaan dengan Daerah dan Pantai Mar del Plata yang menjadi tumpuan pelancung dari dalam negeri dan juga daripada negara Amerika Selatan pada musim panas. Pantai pelancungan itu adalah di tepi Laut Atlantik yang paling keselatan di benua itu. Di daratan pula terdapat ladang-ladang ternakan lembu yang luas dan ladang kuda yang masyhur. Setelah taklimat dan jamuan makan kami masing-masing diberi lencana Kota Mar del Plata sebagai kenangan lawatan, dan kemudian dibawa melawat pantai Mar del Plata.

Pantainya lebar dan panjang berpasir warna perang, tetapi tiada seorang pengunjung kelihatan di situ melainkan beberapa pekerja yang mengumpul kerusi meja dan kelengkapan permainan ditengah-tengah pantai pasir itu hingga ke kaki air, menanti musim panas yang akan datang.

Hampir satu jam kami menikmati pandangan di pantai yang lengang itu. Oleh kerana saya pernah bertugas sebagai Pegawai Daerah Kuantan di Pahang dalam tahun 1963, teringat juga saya kepada lambaian daun kelapa di pantai Telok Chempedak dan Cherating dengan bungkah batu yang besar. Tidak ada bungkah batu besar atau pokok kelapa di Mar del Plata. Tetapi di sini pasirnya landai tidak curam hingga jauh hala ke lautan Atlantik.

Setelah pulang ke Buenos Aires, dan pada pagi berikutnya, sebelum kami pulang ke New York, sekali lagi kami pergi ke Kementerian Luar Argentina untuk bertemu dengan Menteri Luar dan pegawai-pegawai Argentina. Menterinya bertanya sama ada misi kami masing-masing telah tercapai dalam lawatan itu. Saya, bagi pihak semua Wakil Tetap, mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Menteri dan pegawai-pegawai Argentina di atas keraian yang kami terima. Saya menambah lagi bahawa Perwakilan Malaysia puas hati dan akan memberikan sokongan kepada penyertaan Argentina dalam IAEA di Vienna, dan berharap Argentina memberikan sokongan undi kepada bidaan Malaysia untuk menduduki kerusi dalam Majlis Keselamatan PBB pada Perhimpunan PBB pada akhir tahun 1988 itu. Menteri itu menjawab, percayalah

katanya. Wakil Tetap yang lain juga mengatakan mereka puas hati dengan hasil lawatan ke Argentina.

Setelah saya kembali di Perwakilan Tetap Malaysia di New York, saya menilai semula akan hasil lawatan ke Buenos Aires sebagai rangkuman kepada usaha semenjak saya dilantik menjadi Wakil Tetap di PBB pada pertengahan 1986, untuk melaksanakan inisiatif untuk mendapatkan Kerusi-giliran di Majlis Keselamatan PBB bagi penggal 1989-90. Saya merasa puas hati dan yakin mendapat undi Argentina dan sokongan daripada 5 negara MERCOSUR, kerana jelas kepada saya bahawa Argentina adalah kunci bagi mendapatkan sokongan itu daripada negara-negara Amerika Selatan kepada Malaysia. Pada hemat saya, sokongan itu adalah tambahan kepada yang telah dijanjikan kepada saya oleh kebanyakan negara semenjak saya menjalankan tugas di New York. Hampir semua negara Asia dan Timur Tengah serta sebahagian besar negara di Africa telah menyatakan demikian, dan juga kerana saya sudah rapat dengan negara-negara kecil di Lautan Pasifik kerana ditugaskan demikian oleh PM Tun Hussein apabila dilantik menjadi Pesuruhjaya Tinggi di New Zealand pada tahun 1978-80. Saya yakin semua negara di Lautan Pasifik seperti Samoa Barat akan mengundi dipihak Malaysia.

Alhamdulillah, sebelum saya kembali ke Kuala Lumpur pada bulan Julai 1988 untuk menyandang tugas Ketua Setiausaha di Wisma Putra, misi utama saya di PBB hampir tercapai. Yang hanya perlu diteruskan oleh pengganti di Perwakilan di New York adalah untuk mengekalkan sokongan sehingga hari pengundian di Perhimpunan Agung PBB pada akhir tahun 1988.

Tetapi dengan kehendak Allah juga, dalam bulan-bulan terakhir apa yang dikandung hampir semua bercirikan, dan saya terpaksa kembali ke New York untuk mendapatkan semula sokongan yang telah dijanji kepada saya dahulu. Dengan takdirNya juga setelah saya pulang semula memimpin bidaan di New York, sokongan diberi semula dengan syarat saya berdiri di bawah papan undi dalam Sidang Pleno untuk menyatakan bahawa undi penyokong diberi kerana permintaan peribadi daripada saya. Dan juga undi penentu hanya diberi pada pengundian kali ketiga, kerana penyokong telah berjanji demikian kepada dua bidaan negeri lain pada pengundian Pertama dan Kedua.

Bagaimana keadaan demikian berlaku, dan apa yang saya korbankan untuk kembalikan maruah Negara dan Bangsa tidak ingin saya cerita dalam cerita ini. Dan juga saya tidak mahu rakan-rakan bersama saya dalam misi ke Buenos Aires bersangka yang mereka telah terjebak dalam permainan diplomasi Malaysia semata.

Bagaimana pun yang amat mencuit hati saya, dan yang juga tidak mungkin saya

lupakan, adalah penemuan dua ekor pudu pada di antara tumbuhan kiambang yang timbul di tepi Tasik Huapi di Bariloche di wilayah San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina dalam tahun 1988. Seperti juga pada lukisan cat yang besar digantung pada dinding Konsulat Malaysia yang saya buka di Medan, Sumatra dalam bulan Oktober 1968, setelah Konfrontasi tamat, dengan lukisan perahu memecah kiambang dalam tasik, dengan tulisan pepatah Melayu, " *Biduk Lalu, Kiambang Bertaut* " .

Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Yusof Hitam joined the Malayan Civil Service (MCS) as Assistant Secretary (Service) at the Federal Establishment Office, Federal House on 16 June 1960. He retired as Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 1 January 1991.

THE DYNAMICS OF AI AND 4IR IN THE BUSINESS OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS SPV 2030

Dato' Dr. Rothiah Omar, Azrol Abdullah & Nor'airin Abd Rashid

Abstract

Technology is the fundamental factor that drives economic growth since the beginning of the First Industrial Revolution up to the present Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the crucial new technologies that is fundamental for the progress of 4IR especially in gearing the government's aspiration towards Shared Prosperity Vision 2030. Despite the promising symbiosis, many are still bewildered by the true AI capabilities for 4IR's ecology. In this article we provide an outlook about AI and 4IR. Much less attention has been paid to matters relating to the philosophical and theoretical aspects. However, it is sufficient enough to provide a general overview about AI and 4IR. We also explore the nexus between AI and 4IR, and how far AI can facilitate the business of modern government. Our analyses reveal that the government is not facing any difficulty in embracing 4IR but the real challenge comes from the unresolved quandaries on AI.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, AI, 4IR, Fourth Industrial Revolution, government, technology, Shared Prosperity Vision 2030, SPV 2030.

Introduction

Technology is the fundamental factor that drives economic growth ever since the beginning of the First Industrial Revolution up to the present Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The astonishing capabilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is perceived to be the significant catalyst for 4IR. The interconnection and integration between machines, AI and people are inevitable in 4IR. The convergence of these technologies ultimately produces intelligent systems such as autonomous vehicles, drones, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology and quantum computing. Intelligent robots are machines that are being supplemented with AI system which is regarded as the zenith of future intelligent machines. Malaysia is receptive towards entering into the realm of 4IR. In fact, the stint of 4IR has already been in Malaysia since the introduction of the Malaysia Industrial Master Plan 3 (IMP3:2010- 2020). This article offers an outlook on the following questions: What is AI? What is 4IR?

What is the symbiosis between AI and 4IR? and What does AI promise for the government?

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

More often than not, the impression of the word AI will narrate anthropomorphic manifestations. One would imagine AI as robots akin to the misconceived ones about robots taking over the world shown in the Hollywood movies like the Terminator, Star Wars, HAL from 2001: A space Odyssey and scared the heads off viewers. These Hollywood movies will remain where they are – science fiction.

Perhaps the words uttered by Bruce Buchanan, who was one of the *Dendral* (the first AI expert system) creators can be an interesting phrase to begin with:

‘The history of AI is a history of fantasies, possibilities, demonstrations, and promise. Ever since Homer wrote of mechanical ‘tripods’ waiting on the gods at dinner, imagined mechanical assistants have been a part of our culture. However, only in the last half century have we, the AI community, been able to build experimental machines that test hypotheses about the mechanisms of thought and intelligent behaviour and thereby demonstrate mechanisms that formerly existed only as theoretical possibilities.’¹

Legal systems so far do not proffer an exact definition or at least working definition of the word ‘AI’.² AI Researchers have worked tirelessly trying to provide an exhaustive and definite meaning to the word AI. The effort somehow still remains as an ongoing work. Affixing concise meaning to the term AI is significant as it will dictate the true nature of AI and determine at which level a machine or system can be regarded as intelligent. It would be apposite to seek solace to the expression articulated by John McCarthy being the first person who coined the word ‘artificial intelligence’ in 1956. According to McCarthy, AI is the science of engineering making machines intelligent especially intelligent computer programmes.³ Intelligence in this sense refers

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- 1 Bruce G Buchanan, ‘A (Very) Brief History of Artificial Intelligence’, (2005) 26 (4) *AI Magazine*, p 53.
 - 2 Daniel Eszteri, ‘Liability for Operation and Damages Caused by Artificial Intelligence-With Short Outlook to Online Games’ (2015) 153 *Studia Luridica Auctoritate Universitatis Pecs Publicata* p 58.
 - 3 John McCarthy, ‘What is Artificial Intelligence’, (12.11.2007), Stanford University, <http://www-formal.stanford.edu/jmc/whatisai/>, p 2 (3.10.2019).

to the computational part of the ability to achieve goals in the world.⁴ Intelligence ought to be distinguished from IQ. IQ is based on rates at which intelligence develops in children. It is the ratio of the age at which a child would normally makes a certain score to the child's age.⁵ However, this does not mean that the idea of intelligent machine never existed prior to 1956. The concept and philosophy of intelligent machines have been around since the middle ages. But the historical and philosophical aspects of AI are not covered by this article. The problem in defining AI does not come from the concept of artificiality but the real challenge comes from the conceptual ambiguity of 'intelligence'. Reason being, the definition of 'intelligence' is normally tied to the human attributes.⁶ Leading introductory textbook on AI, presents eight different definitions of AI which are being organised into four categories namely; (a) thinking humanly, (b) acting humanly, (c) thinking rationally and (d) acting rationally.⁷ Over the years, some researchers are no longer interested to adopt this approach to make bench-marking on AI because there is no point of duplicating the exemplar.⁸ In supporting their view, they gave an analogy that, aeronautical engineers do not define the goal of their field to make "machines that fly so exactly like pigeons that they can fool even other pigeons".⁹

Therefore, they opined that in order to explore AI, emphasis must be placed on the study of the underlying principles of intelligence instead of assessing whether the machine can think or act like human. Daniel Eszteri (2015) concurred to this notion by upholding that the purpose of AI development is not to mimic human behaviour but to build rationally acting system.¹⁰ In this sense, creating a machine that mimics human behaviour discounts its eligibility from being recognised as AI. If this line of

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid, p 3.

6 Matthew U. Scherer, *Regulating Artificial Intelligence Systems: Risks, Challenges, Competencies and Strategies*, (2016), 29 *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*, p 359.

7 Stuart J. Russel, Peter Norvig, *Artificial Intelligence A Modern Approach*, 3rd Ed, Pearson Education, New Jersey, 2010, p 2.

8 *ibid*, p 3.

9 *ibid*, p 3.

10 Daniel Eszteri, *supra* at 2, p 63.

argument is to be taken as correct, then *Sophia*¹¹ may not be a true AI robot after all because most of its abilities display human-like behaviour only.

However, there are still recent views that concur with the conservative view demanding for AI to mimic humans. Ean Sebastian Desroches and Shan Jiang (2017) stated that AI is essentially designed to allow machines to mimic human ‘cognitive’ functions such as learning and problem solving, in order for them to conduct tasks that are normally performed by humans.¹² At this point, it can be suggested that AI’s ability in ‘problem solving’ must not be measured from its ability to replicate the methods in the way humans do. Instead, AI must be able to resolve problems in a way that humans never have ever considered. The use of C-Path is the perfect example to illustrate this position. The C-Path is a cancer pathology machine learning that was initially programmed to study the supportive tissue (stroma) surrounding cancerous cells in aiding the cancer prognosis. However, C-Path discovered that the study of stroma was actually a more effective prognostic indicator for breast cancer. This outcome is a consequence of the computational resources available to these specialised AI programmes combined with AI’s freedom from the cognitive biases that affect humans.¹³ In this respect, we observe that the desire to say that AI is ‘smart’ cannot be ruled out.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

4IR or industry 4.0 are some of the various names given to mark the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The term ‘4IR’ was first announced at the Hannover Fair in 2011 by the German Government as an initiative to ensure the future competitiveness of the country’s manufacturing sector.¹⁴

4IR has now become the trendy buzz word that crosses every lip of any optimistic industry players. Some have regarded it as the avantgarde of all other industrial

11 Sophia is a human like robot created by the Hanson Robotics. As a unique combination of science, engineering and artistry, Sophia is simultaneously a human-crafted science fiction character depicting the future of AI and robotics, and AI research, [https://www.hansonrobotics.com/sophia/\(04.10.2019\)](https://www.hansonrobotics.com/sophia/(04.10.2019)).

12 Ean-Sebastien Desroches and Shan Jiang, Artificial Intelligence and its legal challenges, *Need to Know, Lavery C.A.*, (2017), p 1.

13 Matthew U. Scherer, *supra* at no.6, p. 364.

14 Klaus Schwab, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, Penguin Random House, United Kingdom, 2017, p 7.

revolutions. 4IR's potentials in various dimensions are obvious particularly in the area of Internet of Things (IOT) beguiled interests of the industry players and researchers.

The prime objective of 4IR is to focus on the manufacturing sector. 4IR is also described as an era where the connection between the innovations of the first industrial revolution merges with the devices created during the second and third industrial revolution.¹⁵ 4IR revolves around collecting data and communication transmission.

The collected data will then be utilised to build ever smarter products. It is not an off-the shelf product or even a specific technology, but a combination of technologies that create cyber-physical systems (CPS), which represent the fusion of advanced digital technology and AI with both people and machines.

Meanwhile, some critics have ventilated their dissatisfaction claiming that the Fourth Industrial Revolution is not exactly new. They asserted that 4IR has been around since 1940, based on a document titled 'America's Last Chance' by Albert Carr in ushering modern communications as part of the industrial revolution and the beginning of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.¹⁶ They claimed that the term was revived by Professor Klaus Schwab when he used it as the central theme for the World Economic Forum (WEF) Conference in January 2016.¹⁷ Be that as it may.

15 David Chukwuemeka, Okafor Samson Nonso, Ekesiobi Chukwunoso & Obegolu Casmir, 'Electricity and the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Implications for the Nigerian Economy', (2018), *11th Annual Energy Conference 2018*, Abuja, p 1.

16 Elizabeth Garbee, *This is Not the Fourth Industrial Revolution-the meaningless phrase got tossed around a lot at this year's World Economic Forum*, http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2016/01/the_world_economic_forum_is_wrong_this_isn't_the_fourth_industrial_revolution.html (05.10.2018).

17 Ibrahim Abu Ahmad, *Is it the Dawn of Industrial revolution 4.0 in Malaysia?* (4.11.2016), Myforesight, https://www.myforesight.my/2016/11/04/is_it_the_dawn_of_industrial_revolution_4.0_in_Malaysia, p 6, (25.9.2019).

The Symbiosis between 4IR and AI in Malaysia

One of the essential elements of 4IR is advance robotics. Advance robotics cannot exist without the aid from AI technology.¹⁸ There are six converging factors that motivate AI to play a pertinent role in 4IR. These converging factors resulted in AI to move in vitro (research labs) and in vivo (everyday lives).¹⁹ The said converging factors can be described as follows:²⁰

- a. *Big data*: the use of computers permit human to access huge number of data which can improve human lives. Trillions of sensors are transmitted in appliances, packages, clothing and autonomous vehicles. AI software will assist this big data to discover historical patterns and translate into more efficient solutions or predictions that can benefit human.
- b. *Processing power*: Advance technologies permit the use of new methods to emerge such as cloud computing and graphic processing units. These technologies are becoming cheaper and offer easy and faster access with the aid from AI systems.
- c. *Connected globe*: The mode of interaction among humans meets radical change. The increased connectivity among humans through social media platforms resulted in a new form of knowledge sharing known as the ‘collective intelligence’.
- d. *Open-source software and data*: Open source outlook allows AI tools to be developed faster in routine coding, wider application and industry standardisation. Suffice to name some open-source machine learning such as TensorFlow, Caffe2, PyTorch and Parl.ai.

18 Klaus Schwab, *supra* at 9, p 14

19 PWC, ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution for the Earth’, Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for the Earth, January 2018, [https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/sustainability/assets/ai for the earth Jan. 2018.pdf](https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/sustainability/assets/ai%20for%20the%20earth%20Jan.%202018.pdf), (1 August 2018) p 5.

20 Ibid.

- e. *Improved algorithms*: In this aspect, a new breakthrough is achieved when ‘deep learning’ emerged in the field of AI. ‘Deep learning’ involves neural network that functions similar to the function of the human brain. Another emerging field is ‘deep reinforcement’ where AI system functions based on limited data or with no data, by trial and error optimized by reward function.
- f. *Accelerating returns*: The promising use of AI had fueled competition between AI researchers to produce improved algorithms and open source software in making demands, which were previously impossible, into reality. For instance, personalising consumer products and utilising intelligent automation to optimize output

Malaysia cannot afford to lag behind in a world facing swift, exponential change driven by technology. The dawn of 4IR has officially arrived and attracted many interests from various countries including Malaysia.²¹ In fact, 4IR is not new to Malaysia. It has been around since its Industrial Master Plan 3 (IMP3: 2010-2020). Although IMP3 does not specifically mention about 4IR, the nucleus function of IMP3 demonstrates that it has sufficient fundamental elements of 4IR. The IMP3 deals comprehensively with issues and challenges faced by manufacturing and non-Government services sectors, including the aspiration for a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce, creation of an efficient network of logistics services and application of advanced technologies.²²

In response to the significant developments that are taking place on the international platform, Malaysia has calibrated all of its government policies in the Eleventh Malaysian Plan 2016-2020 (11thMP). The strategy stresses on the ‘Strengthening of the Manufacturing Sector’ by leveraging on productivity through automation process. Indeed, the zenith of automation is AI. The merger of manufacturing, automation and AI will give profound impact on almost every industry, and promises greater wealth for successful companies and economies around the world. In this respect, AI is considered as the fundamental tool towards achieving the goal set by the Eighth Thrust of 11th MP. Thus, the government made an announcement on 19.10.2017 to introduce

21 Ibrahim Abu Ahmad, *supra* at 12, p 5.

22 Ministry of International Trade and Industry Malaysia, ‘Macro Framework of the Third Industrial Master Plan’, <http://www.miti.gov.my/miti/resources/auto/20download/20images/557f968be4aaf.pdf>, (09.09.2018) p 41.

the National Artificial Intelligence Framework which was to be steered by the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC). The intended National Artificial Intelligence Framework was considered to be part of the programme to the National Big Data Analytics Framework²³ The plan also targeted to establish Digital Transformation Acceleration Programme (D-TAP) and will introduce a ‘Cloud First’ strategy in addition to the Malaysia Tech Entrepreneur Programme (M-TEP).²⁴

However, after the change of government in 2018, MDEC was once again asked to redraft a National Framework for AI. MDEC is expected to complete the National Framework for AI by the end of 2019.²⁵ So far MDEC is reported to have completed 50% of the said framework and a special unit has been established to expedite this project.²⁶ MDEC remains mum about the AI framework theme. It is unknown whether the framework shall be focusing on the development of AI, ethics, policy or liability. Obviously, avid AI researchers are looking forward to see how far this framework would avail assistance in determining the level of AI and future development of AI in Malaysia.

Apart from domestic efforts, Malaysia has also engaged in bilateral discussions with other technology nations. In November 2018, Malaysia invited Japan to invest in

23 Azura Abass, ‘Najib Unveils Malaysia’s digital ‘to do list’ to propel digital initiatives implementation’, (19.10.2017), *New Straits Times*, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/10/292784/najib-unveils-malaysias-digital-do-list-propel-digital-initiatives>, (23.09.2018).

24 The Law Library of Congress, ‘Regulation of Artificial Intelligence in Selected Jurisdictions’, (January 2019), Global Legal Research Directorate, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/artificial-intelligence/regulation-artificial-intelligence.pdf>, p 49 (1.10.2019).

25 Bernama, ‘MDEC to complete National AI Framework by year-end’ (02.04.2019), in the *New Straits Times*, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2019/04/475361/mdec-complete-national-ai-framework-year-end> (04.08.2019).

26 Star, ‘MDEC to set up AI unit’, (05.07.2019), *The Star Online*, <https://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2019/07/05/mdec-to-set-up-ai-unit>, (04.08.2019).

Malaysia's AI industry to enable her to leap further into more advanced level.²⁷

Meanwhile in April 2019, China had endorsed its commitment to collaborate with a Malaysian local company to build the first AI park in Malaysia.²⁸ The park will serve as the platform for the development of AI solutions in the areas of computer vision, speech recognition, natural language and humanoid/robotics. The details of the AI park are yet to be made public. However, one might throw a poser on whether the proposed AI park will be similar to the *Tokku* established in Japan?

Tokku is a Special Zone for Robotics Empirical Testing and Development (RT special zone) originated in Japan. The special zone serves as a shock buffer for supporting human-robot new ecology.²⁹ The function of the special zone is to ensure machine safety, prevent high litigation risk, and to ease radical ethics disputes. The Special zone will allow regulators and manufacturers to identify the risks that can be foreseen before it is released into the real world. If the conceptual idea of AI park in Malaysia is similar to *Tokku*, then the conclusion that China is permitted to perform AI testing on the Malaysian soil is inevitable. Consequently, other compelling issues like legal liability, risks, ethics and regulations will arise; and must be given paramount consideration before the proposed AI park can be allowed to operate.

Recently, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad had launched the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV 2030). SPV 2030 is seen to replace Vision 2020 which was introduced by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in 1991 during his previous administration.³⁰ SPV 2030 is defined as a commitment to make Malaysia a

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- 27 Malay Mail, 'Malaysia hopes to tap Japan's expertise in AI investment, (7.11.2019), *Malay Mail Online*, <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/11/07/malaysia-hopes-to-tap-japans-expertise-in-ai-investment/1690988>.
- 28 Bernama, 'G3 Global and Chinese firms to build AI Park in Malaysia', *New Straits Times*, (26.4.2019), <https://www.nst.com.my/business/2019/04/483219/g3-global-and-chinese-firms-build-ai-park-malaysia>, (3.10.2019)
- 29 Yueh-Hsuan Weng et al, 'Intersection of 'Tokku' Special Zone, Robots, and the Law: A Case Study on Legal Impacts to Humanoid Robots', (2015), *International Journal of Social Robotics*, p 7.
- 30 Shannon Teoh, 'Mahathir Mohamad launches Shared Prosperity Vision 2030', (6.10.2019), *The Straits Times*, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/mahathir-launches-shared-prosperity-vision-2030>, (7.10.2019).

nation that achieves sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution, across income groups, ethnicity, regions and supply chains.³¹ The main targets in SPV 2030 are the B40 (lower income group), the hardcore poor, the economically poor, those in economic transition, Orang Asli, Sabah and Sarawak *bumiputras*, the disabled, youths, women, children and senior citizens.³²

SPV 2030 is driven by seven strategic thrusts. However, only the third strategic thrust is relevant for this article. The third strategic thrust has emphasised on human capital where 40% of the Human Resource Development Fund will be channelled to 4IR training.³³ SPV 2030 also predicts that the country's economy can be leveraged through 15 Key Economic Growth Activities (KEGA) including the industrial revolution 4.0.³⁴ To ensure that the nation's economic development is distributed fairly among all the states in Malaysia, each State is assigned specific responsibilities according to KEGA. Hence, Selangor is chosen to be the hub for 4IR.³⁵ SPV 2030 can be a promising strategy for Malaysia to cushion the global impact of 4IR especially in managing 75 million global displacement of jobs.³⁶ However, despite the displacement of jobs, 4IR is expected to be the catalyst for the emergence of 133 million new jobs.³⁷

In this sense, 4IR can be regarded a promising vehicle for the future economy. Therefore, the Government's initiative to introduce SPV 2030 is apt to meet the present global demand.

31 Government of Malaysia, *Summary Shared Prosperity Vision 2030*, 5.10.2019, Percetakan Nasional Berhad, p 1.

32 Zakiah Koya, 'PM launches Shared Prosperity Vision 2030, says will hit the ground running', (5.10.2019), The Star Online, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/10/05/pm-launches-shared-prosperity-vision-2030-says-will-hit-the-ground-running>, (9.10.2019).

33 Government of Malaysia, *supra* at no 31, p 16.

34 *Ibid*, p 18.

35 *Ibid*, p 19.

36 Centre for the New Economy and Society, *Insight Report-The Future of Jobs Report 2018*, 2018, World Economic Forum, Geneva, p viii.

37 *Ibid*.

The promise of AI for the Government

AI technology is considered to be the fundamental vehicle that accelerates robotics and digitalisation.³⁸ Things are becoming smarter with AI technology. Suffice to illustrate a few. Farmers can now use satellite data to increase their crop yield; shipping ports are becoming more transparent with blockchain being able to help track millions of cargo shipments; and medical researchers are able to explore new medications to treat diseases with the use of Watson machine.

The symbiosis between human and AI leverage the volumes of data to make better policy decisions, improve work flow and introduce new innovations, thus, attracting governments and businesses to increasingly embrace AI. Research suggests that the use of AI and automation can help the government to save millions of labour hours and billions in wages per year. The time saved could be channeled to more critical tasks. Fluidity in AI allows customisation, from automating tasks to augmenting work, making tasks easier. This holds the true promise of AI.

The collaboration between human and computer strengths allow work to be completed faster and smarter, even performing task considered impossible before. When the work can be done in lesser time, a government might be able to reduce the number of staff and return the money saved to the taxpayers.³⁹ AI helps the government to do works that need to get done, so humans can focus on works that really matters. AI allows the government to provide faster and more tailored services for the public.⁴⁰ It is estimated that governments that apply AI in their businesses would have the potential to double their economic growth rates by 2035 and boost labour productivity in developed economies.⁴¹ The adoption of AI technology into the Government work-flow may

38 Advisory Board on Artificial Intelligence and Human Society, *Report on Artificial Intelligence and Human Society-Unofficial Translation*, (2017), https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/tyousakai/ai/summary/aisociety_en.pdf, p7. (9.9.2019).

39 Emma Martinho-Truswell, How AI Could Help the Public Sector, *Harvard Business Review*, (29.01.2018), <https://hbr.org/2018/01/how-ai-could-help-the-public-sector>, (20.9.2019).

40 Ibid.

41 Mark Purdy & Paul Daugherty, Why Artificial Intelligence is the Future of Growth', Accenture, https://www.accenture.com/t20170524t055435_w/ca-en/_acnmedia/pdf-52/accenture-why-ai-is-the-future-of-growth.pdf, P 16-17 (1.9.2019).

mitigate some of government's past weaknesses, which may be illustrated as follows:⁴²

a. *Resource constraints*

AI permits the execution of tasks which previously was thought to be impractical in terms of scale, speed and volume. It allows for optimal resource distribution, workforce optimisation and the allocation of the right resources to the right tasks.⁴³ For instance, the United States' Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) 'Education Dominance' program uses AI to reduce the time required for Navy recruits to become technical experts (from years to months) through the creation of a digital tutor that applies machine learning to model-expert interaction. This has resulted in recruits outperforming experts with seven to ten years of experience.⁴⁴

b. *Paperwork burdens*

It is still an inconvenient truth that paper is the most important item in any government office due to various archaic reasons. Equipping AI in government businesses will pave the way towards the realisation of paperless government. This is not only a positive move for the environment but also be able to save the organisation's expenditures and able to stimulate productivity.⁴⁵

The effectiveness of this method proved to be successful when the Sabi Sands Game Reserve in South Africa gave away its traditional methods in using paper, pen and clipboards in their fight against rhino poachers. With the help of AI technology, the Sabi Sands Game Reserve is able to capture photos, document the

42 William D. Eggers, David Schatsky & Peter Viechnicki, How AI can benefit Government in *AI-augmented government-Using cognitive technologies to redesign public sector work*, 2017, Deloitte University Press, p 7.

43 Ibid.

44 Slava Jankin Mikhaylov, Marc Esteve and Averill Campion, 'The Public Sector: Opportunitites and Challenges of Cross -Sector Collaboration', *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. A*, p 4.

45 Kate Harrison, 'Can't Go Paperless? Try This "Paper Light" Approach and Save A Fortune, (27.8.2018), *Forbes*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kateharrison/2018/08/27/cant-go-paperless-try-this-paper-light-approach-and-save-a-fortune/#35e36a254f5c>, (23.9.2019).

location where the poachers' track and detect the location of the rhinos being killed.⁴⁶ Sabi Sands Game Reserve can now see the weak points in their reserve area to protect rhino population.

c. *Real-Time Tracking*

Intelligent AI technology embedded with cutting edge sensors and cameras allow enforcement agencies to track and report important information in real time. AI-enabled real-time tracking and reporting will enhance the effectiveness of disease surveillance and security control especially of government agencies located at the country's border. For example, in 2017, Hitachi had announced the development of its AI detection and tracking technology which can distinguish an individual in real-time using features that are over hundred categories of external characteristics such as gender, colour of clothing, and carried items. This technology enables the detection of suspicious individuals and missing persons using the data from the security cameras set up at specific locations. This program makes it possible to follow the targeted person from camera images even if only the rear-view is captured and the face cannot be seen.⁴⁷

d. *Improving predictions*

AI allows the government to make better predictions based on the available data. Getting precise prediction can be an important advantage to some crucial sectors in the government such as improving the diagnosis made by doctors. Conventional clinical diagnosis is mostly done by the doctor's expertise and experience. Unfortunately, cases involving wrong diagnosis and treatment do not suggest that they will recede. Not all tests contribute towards effective diagnosis

46 Kassidi Koronkowski, 'How 10 Companies Saved Time and Money with GoCanvas', (6.1.2019), GoCanvas, <https://www.gocanvas.com/content/blog/post/going-paperless-is-the-way-of-the-future-how-10-companies-have-saved-time-a/>, (25.9.2018).

47 Hitachi, 'Development of image-analysis technology with AI for real-time people detection and tracking', News Release, (27.3.2017), <https://www.hitachi.com/New/cnews/month/2017/03/170327.pdf>, p 1, (21.9.2019).

of a disease.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, various researches suggest that AI can ameliorate the prediction of heart disease with more accuracy by using genetic algorithm.⁴⁹

Apart from health, AI is also able to formulate effective plans for natural disasters, especially in weather forecasting. Since the 1950's, weather predictions involve statistical learning methods and linear regressions which often lead to unreliable results.⁵⁰ Applying AI techniques together with physical understanding of the environment can improve prediction for multiple types of high impact weather.⁵¹ It can be applied for various weather problems such as the duration of storm, weather severity, precipitation classification and renewable energy.⁵² IBM had even acknowledged that AI predictions can reach up to 95% accuracy.⁵³ Perhaps, it is timely for AI to be applied by the relevant authority in preventing trans-boundary haze, which has become an annual nuisance to the whole of Malaysia.

Conclusion

The dawn of 4IR has finally arrived. Its exponential development is obvious and must be embraced by all industries to remain competitive. This present revolution does not discriminate any area of the industry whether the industry is managed by the deep pockets or otherwise. It is undeniable that AI is one of the stimulating factors that drives 4IR towards achieving the aspirations outlined in SPV 2030. Indeed, AI is the zenith of future intelligent machines. These intelligent machines are not only able to leverage the amount of information in the form of meta-data but is also capable of creating new data, providing solutions that have never been thought by humans.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid. p 5373.

50 Amy McGovern et. al, 'Using Artificial Intelligence to Improve Real-Time Decision-Making for High-Impact Weather', (October 2017), *American Meteorological Society*, p 2075-2076.

51 Ibid. p 2073.

52 Ibid. p 2076-2079.

53 Eric Rosenbaum, 'IBM Artificial Intelligence can predict with 95% accuracy which workers are about to quit their jobs', (3.4.2019), *CNBC*, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/04/03/ibm-ai-can-predict-with-95-percent-accuracy-which-employees-will-quit.html>, (2.10.2019).

Therefore, it is important to place emphasis on AI which must be able to function within human control without curtailing the future development of AI and its potentials. So far, efforts carried out by Malaysia in navigating its way towards 4IR is promising. 4IR seems to appear in every policy of the government and recently in SPV 2030. People are also starting to get comfortable and familiar with the term 4IR.

However, there are many areas relating to AI which are still left unattended. Programs on 4IR will be handicapped if multifarious issues on AI are being kept on shelves. AI may not be a hard science where theories and hypotheses are subjected to objective assessment. It is acknowledged that what qualifies as AI may be open for debate, but it must not sway us from the ultimate truth that AI will impact many things that we hold dear. Perhaps it is timely for the government to get everything to the drawing board to chart the potential, threats and future of AI in Malaysia.

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