

TEXT OF SPEECH BY
YAB DATUK AMAR ABANG HAJI ABDUL RAHMAN
ZOHARI
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CHIEF MINISTER OF SARAWAK

HARI SARAWAK
22 JULY 2018

Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, salam sejahtera dan salam Ibu Pertiwiku.

1. ADDRESS TO TUAN YANG TERUTAMA

Tuan Yang Terutama, TunPehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud dan Yang Amat Berbahagia, Toh Puan Datuk Patinggi Ragad Kurdi Taib,

Bagi pihak rakyat sekalian, kaula menjunjung kasih dan mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Tundan Toh Puan kerana sudi hadir bersama rakyat jelata untuk meraikan Hari Sarawak pada hari ini 22 Julai 2018.

Tuan Yang Terutama Tun, we are very honoured to have you once again among us Tun to celebrate the anniversary of 22nd July, 1963 that is now called Hari Sarawak to commemorate the day Sarawak was given the power of self-rule by the colonial government. The significance of 22nd July was first highlighted when it was made a public celebration in 2012 during Tun's tenure as Chief Minister. It was declared a public holiday in Sarawak in 2016 during the time of the late Pehin Sri Haji Adenan Haji Satem.

Of course Tun, 22nd July is much, much bigger than itself as a mere public off day to commemorate the day the British decided to surrender Sarawak's administration to the sons and daughters of Sarawak. It should underscore the importance of a prelude to Sarawak's participation as one of the parties that had agreed to form Malaysia and no less important for all Malaysians to know that Sarawak then came to the table to agree as **a sovereign state** with all its rights and privileges as outlined in the Malaysia Agreement 1963.

Thank you Tun and Toh Puan for being able to be with the *rakyat* here this morning to celebrate this very special day for all Sarawakians.

Tun yourself witnessed the transfer of power from the colonial government to sons and daughters of Sarawak and Tun was a member of that particular (first) cabinet.

Tun, now let me address the audience here this morning.

2. ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE

(i) Salutation

YB Timbalan-Timbalan Ketua Menteri

YB Speaker Dewan Undangan Negeri

Menteri-Menteri Kerajaan Negeri dan Persekutuan

Saudara dan saudari yang dihormati

Terima kasih kepada para hadirin sekalian yang datang beramai-ramai untuk sama-sama meraikan hari yang begitu penting kepada kita sebagai rakyat Negeri Sarawak. Saya mengucapkan selamat menyambut Hari Sarawak kepada

hadirin sekalian dan juga kepada seluruh rakyat Negeri Sarawak.

Tarikh 22 Julai 1963 hendaklah diberi suatu pengertian yang cukup mendalam kepada usaha bersama kita rakyat Negeri Sarawak untuk menentukan masa hadapan kita sendiri sebagai sebuah masyarakat yang bebas dan berdaulat.

Saya amat berharap usaha kita untuk memberi penekanan kepada signifikansi 22 Julai ini akan terus mendorong seluruh rakyat negeri ini untuk bersatu tenaga bagi memastikan kita mampu berdiri sama tinggikan duduk sama rendah dengan negeri-negeri lain yang sudah maju di samping mempertahankan hak-hak Sarawak sebagai satu pihak yang telah melahirkan Malaysia.

(ii) Decolonization East of Suez

Ladies and gentlemen,

The collapse of the British imperial power can be traced back to its extensive defeats in World War II. The catastrophic defeats in Europe and Asia between 1940 and 1942 destroyed its

financial and economic power, the real foundation on which the imperial system hung. The withdrawal of British colonial power “East of Suez” had presented to us in Sarawak then the opportunity to become a free people after being under rule of the White Rajahs for a hundred years and as a British crown colony from 1946 to 1963.

(iii) Becoming Free People Without Bloodshed

The British Policy of decolonisation has set an atmosphere for British Colonies to be handed back to the people of these colonised lands through negotiation and consultation, therefore saving the people of these lands from warfare and bloodshed, including the people of Sarawak. This led to former British colonies becoming or being grouped to give birth to new countries such as Malaysia, and later the association of former British territories into what is called the Commonwealth countries.

(iv) Self-Government and formation of Malaysia

Fifty-five years ago today the power of self-government was handed over to Sarawak's first Chief Minister Tan Sri Datuk Amar Stephen Kalong Ningkan. A few months later after much consultation among Sarawak leaders of the time, with Britain and with Malaya, Sarawak decided to form Malaysia with Malaya, Sabah and Singapore for reasons that were completely valid at the time.

In 1963, the circumstances were much different from what it is today. We were not only a backwater, undeveloped country but also poor and poverty was rife. We were under the threat of communism, China was trying to expand and Indonesia was dominated by Parti Komunis Indonesia which had territorial claims in this region. The Philippines was also hostile at that time because they lay claim to Sabah.

In the circumstances, knowing that we cannot defend ourselves alone, we look to safety to the Commonwealth and fellow Malaysians from Malaya. But at the same time, we were jealous of our independence. **That is why after agreeing to be a part of Malaysia in principle we insist on certain terms and conditions which gave us autonomy over many aspects of Sarawak's constitutional life.**

(v) 55 years on

Sarawak became a part of Malaysia with high hopes that it could become like Malaya. Malaya was well ahead of Sarawak in terms of development at the time and that was what our founding leaders and people envisaged for Sarawak. At the same time we were cautioned of our future in Malaysia.

Our founding father ApaiJugah said:

Anang Malaysia bakatebu

Manis di pun tabar di ujung

Meaning:

Jangan Malaysia sepertitebu

Manis di pangkaltawar di hujung

(vi) Infringement of Sarawak's Rights

Initially Sarawak was quite satisfied that what Malaysia promised was being fulfilled. Sarawak's security against hostile neighbours and internal threat was secured with the help of Malaya and Commonwealth countries. But along the way,

intentionally or otherwise, Sarawak's rights were infringed without Sarawakians being aware of it. This of course has brought about much dissatisfaction to the people of Sarawak. We strongly believe that these erosion of powers must be rectified and settled amicably through negotiation because discontentment is not healthy for the overall wellbeing of Malaysia.

(vii) Oil Mining Ordinance 1958

Even before Malaysia we already have laws to govern the exploitation of our resources, notably our oil. An ordinance called Oil and Mining Ordinance was enacted in 1958 to regulate the extraction of oil in Sarawak. This law has never been repealed and we have never agreed to any federal laws to supersede OMO 1958 and this is provided for in MA63 that laws affecting state rights can only be applicable to and valid in Sarawak after passage in our DUN. Sarawak never agreed to the Petroleum Development Act 1974 passed by Parliament and we maintain that OMO 1958 cannot be implicitly or impliedly repealed by PDA 1974.

OMO 1958 gives the State Government the power to regulate Sarawak's oil, and gas resources. We have gone to the Federal Court against PETRONAS and the court has declined to give leave to PETRONAS to declare that OMO 1958 is not valid. This initial victory was the victory of the people of Sarawak.

This means OMO 1958 gives Sarawak the **full regulatory power** overall persons and companies, including PETRONAS, involved in the activities of oil and gas, on shore and offshore, in Sarawak. This is the very reason why PETROS was formed. The regulatory power over Sarawak's oil and gas activities is vested on PETROS to enforce.

But let me give the assurance that the State Government will always be very rational and business friendly in its dealing with PETRONAS as the national oil company. We also want to be always reasonable with all other players in the industry as any attitude to the contrary will not benefit Sarawak and the nation as a whole.

(viii) More funds for Sarawak's Development

As I have said in the last DUN sitting Sarawak needs **four times** the current quantum of allocation in order to be able to develop good infrastructure throughout the length and breadth of Sarawak, especially in the rural areas. **We, therefore, want rights over our oil and gas in order for us to be able to derive more revenue for development, particularly rural Sarawak.**

Our current strong financial reserve is partly the accumulation of revenue from the oil and gas industry on our shores. We expect to earn more from our gas as now we have a 10 % stake in LNG Train 9 and 25 % in LNG 3. **This money will be given back to the people** when we develop our rural water supply, construct more bridges and build more roads instead of just relying on the Federal Government which has the whole country to look after.

(ix) Relationship with Federal Government and Erosion of State Powers

GE14 is over and we all know that we have a new government in Putrajaya. The Prime Minister Tun Pehin Sri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad was in Kuching recently on his first visit to Sarawak

after becoming Prime Minister. We are very much honoured to have him in Kuching and be able to give him an overview of development in Sarawak. His visit is a testimony that our State Government is able to develop a strong working relationship with the Federal Government even though we are not on the same political platform. Sarawak needs the continuous attention of the Federal Government to ensure unhampered development for the sake of the people of Sarawak.

(x) No Exit from Malaysia

I wish to reiterate here that there's no need for Sarawak to **exit Malaysia** but being in Malaysia does not mean that we cannot ask for our legal rights based on MA63 and the Constitution. I believe with our political independence through GPS we have a better and stronger platform to voice our opinion **freely** to protect the interests of Sarawak. I would add here, that Putrajaya is not London, the seat of British colonial power (that has wielded its power on Sarawak). Petra Jaya will determine the future of Sarawak.

(xi) Conclusion

Tuan Yang Terutama Tun sekali lagi kaula menjunjung kasih dan mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi terima kasih kepada Tun dan Toh Puan yang sudi hadir bersama rakyat jelata pada pagi yang berbahagia ini untuk meraikan hari yang amat bersejarah dan penuh dengan makna ini.

Terima kasih juga kepada saudara dan saudari sekalian kerana sudi meluangkan masa untuk bersama-sama memperingati hari bersejarah 22 Julai. Semoga kita sama-sama mengamati peri pentingnya hari ini kepada semua kita rakyat Sarawak dalam mengejar impian untuk menjadi negeri dan masyarakat yang maju dan dihormati.

Sekian. Terimakasih.