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Corporate Newsletter of Bina Puri Group of Companies

**Kami mengucapkan
SELAMAT MENYAMBUT HARI
KEBANGSAAN KE -48
Kepada semua warga Bina Puri !**



JALUR GEMILANG



On the 40th anniversary of the country's independence, 31 August 1997, provision was made for an official name for the national flag. The version chosen, Jalur Gemilang, combines a Malay word meaning "stripes" or "range of values" with the adjective ("gemilang") signifying "glorious". No change was introduced in the design of the flag.

The flag of Malaysia is a combination of traditional Islamic symbols and the Stars and Stripes. The 14 stripes and the 14 points of the star represents the 14 member states and the crescent and star represents the dominant religion Islam. The blue canton stands for affiliation to the Commonwealth.

Negara Ku

Negara ku, tanah tumpahnya darah ku
Rakyat hidup bersatu dan maju
Rahmat bahagia, Tuhan kurniakan
Raja kita selamat bertakhta

My country, my native land
The people living united and progressive
May God bestow blessing and happiness
May our Ruler have a successful reign

The National Anthem, whose tune has a romantic background which links it to the exile of Sultan Abdullah of Perak to the Seychelles by the British, was selected by a special committee headed by Malaysia's first prime minister, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, who was the Federation of Malaya's Chief Minister and Minister of Home Affairs at the time. Initially, a world-wide contest was held for the composition of a national anthem for the Federation of Malaya. However, none of the entries including those from distinguished composers of international standing, were found suitable. The final selection was made at a ceremony held at the Police Depot, Kuala Lumpur on 5 August 1957. The National Anthem in fact is an adaptation of the Perak State Anthem, which was selected on account of the traditional flavour of its melody.

RUKUNEGARA

We, her peoples, pledge our united efforts to attain these ends guided by these principles;

- Kepercayaan Kepada Tuhan (Belief in God)
- Kesetiaan Kepada Raja dan Negara (Loyalty to King and Country)
- Keluhuran Perlembagaan (The Supremacy of the Constitution)
- Kedaulatan Undang-undang (The Rule of Law)
- Kesopanan dan Kesusilaan (Mutual Respect and Good Social Behaviour)

Their stories ò ,

(interviewed by Buletin Bina Puri
Editor In-Chief)

"Penjajahan Jepun telah membuka minda orang Melayu, itulah zaman bermulanya "Revolusi Mental"
Hj Abdul Latif Yahya

"Tuan Haji, bolehlah ye... susah nak cari generasi sebelum Merdeka ni... bolehlah" saya memujuk beliau untuk menerima jemputan ke perhimpunan ini. Saya terus berjumpa beliau di Sg Long dan mengambil kesempatan daripada temubual tersebut untuk lebih memahami erti Kemerdekaan" .
"Apa nak cerita ni Ti?" tanya beliau.

Saya melihat dan tersenyum ke arahnya. "Tuan Haji, saya generasi lepas Merdeka, yang tahu, masa merdeka kita ada pakatan UMNO, MIC, MCA, Perikatan kan?, itu saja yang tahu, susah payah zaman sebelum tu, tak kot.." Itulah antara reaksi pertama apabila ditanya kenapa perlunya beliau memberikan ucapan semasa perhimpunan nanti. Beliau terdiam seketika, saya kira memikirkan sesuatu untuk memulakan perbualan.



"Waktu Jepun, saya kecil lagi, lebih kurang 5-6 tahun, memanglah susah. Jepun turun dari Kota Bharu, mereka jalan dan berkawad depan rumah kami, di Jelebu, Kuala Klawang. Habis pokok kelapa dia redah, suruh orang kampung panjat, nak minum air".

"Saya sendiri lihat jet pejuang Jepun melintas atas kepala, seronok bukan kepalang, iyelah masa tu budak-budak lagi, mana takut. Yang kasihan orang kampung, ada yang tak pernah panjat pokok kelapa, kena panjat. Orang Jepun pegang "benet" senapang macam pisau tajam, cucuk di punggung orang itu supaya terus naik atas pokok. Jadi kalau dia tak naik, alamat mati tercacak kena benet senapang. Arwah bapa cuba nak tolong, Jepun kata Bagero!!. Kejam sungguh mereka. " mengingati masa lampaunya.

Tuan Haji Latif berpeluang bersekolah di bawah pentadbiran Jepun selama lebih kurang 2 ½ tahun. Pada masa itu semua guru-guru sekolah diwajibkan berbahasa Jepun dengan fasih termasuklah guru Melayu. Menyanyi lagu "Kimigayawa" adalah menjadi kemestian kepadanya setiap pagi di sekolah. Pada waktu itu, orang kampung sangat tertekan, ditindas dan diseksa oleh orang-orang Jepun, sehinggakan bekalan makanan pun tidak mencukupi.

"Beras mana ada? Jepun ambil, kita nak makan apa? Makan keledak, ubi kayu, tapi yang menyedihkan apabila ada yang mati kerana tak cukup zat. Duit ada pun tak laku, arwah bapa jual gula kabung, dapatlah duit, tapi buat apa? Satu beg duit pokok pisang tu ada tapi tak ada harga..." beliau menambah.

Sekali lagi saya lihat pada wajahnya dan mengangguk-anggukkan kepala tanda setuju. Katanya lagi sebelum ini, ramai orang Melayu menyangka bahawa dengan kedatangan Jepun, kehidupan akan bertambah baik, namun keadaan menjadi sebaliknya.

Semakin hari semakin sengsara orang-orang kampung. Pada Latif sendiri, antara keperitan yang dilihat sendiri ialah apabila ramai orang kampungnya (di Jelebu) telah dikerah untuk menjadi buruh paksa.

Tambah menghibakan lagi apabila ada yang tidak pulang langsung ke kampung halaman dan mereka dipercayai telah dihantar ke Burma untuk membina landasan keretapi.

Sehinggalah pada akhir 1945, terdapat satu kumpulan yang menamakan diri mereka sebagai Anti-Jepun ditubuhkan. Mereka berjaya menawan Malaya tetapi hanya bertahan lebih kurang 14 hari. Mereka ini sebenarnya mempraktikkan idelogi komunis, juga telah memecah-belahkan para penduduk. Pertumpahan darah berlaku di merata-rata tempat dan keadaan sungguh teruk.

Akhirnya komunis berjaya ditumpaskan dan mereka melarikan diri ke dalam hutan. Namun segalanya tidak berakhir di situ. Mereka terus mengganggu kestabilan negara dengan menyerang penempatan serta membunuh sehinggalah Malaysia di istiharkan bebas komunis pada tahun 1987.

Berbalik pada keadaan sebelum merdeka, pada tahun 1946, orang-orang Melayu mula berminat dengan politik. Zaman itu dikenali sebagai "Mental Revolution Era" dan UMNO ditubuhkan. Orang Melayu menentang konsep penubuhan "Malayan Union" yang akan mengurangkan kuasa Raja-Raja. Orang Melayu mula bertindak untuk menuntut hak mereka dan membebaskan diri daripada penjajahan.

"Tunku memang bijak, dia tahu kalau cuma orang Melayu minta merdeka, kemungkinan tidak dapat. Jadi beliau telah berpakat dengan Tan Sri Tan Cheng Lock dan Tun Sambathan. Dan bersatu di bawah Parti Perikatan. Mereka telah sama-sama ke London untuk minta merdeka. Akhirnya, pada 31 Ogos 1957 British telah memberikan hak mutlak kita. Saya masih ingat lagi, awal-awal jam 8.00 mlm, saya menunggu di Kelab Selangor, ambil tempat untuk melihat Kemerdekaan"

"Duke of Lawster yang mewakili Queen Elizabeth hadir, waktu bendera Union Jack turun, semua orang di padang sebak, sedih sebab dah merdeka, lepas susah payah dan sengsara oleh Jepun dan Komunis.." Saya nampak ada kaca-kaca jernih di mata beliau, mungkin teringat kesusahan dahulu.

"Macam mana nama Haji ada di Parlimen?" saya bertanya untuk meredakan suasana.

"Oh... itu cerita lain...ni macam mana kamu tau ni?" ketawa kecil apabila ditanya soalan itu.

"Yang tu pasal 13 Mei, saya dah kerja JKR duduk di kuarters di Sg Besi. Masa darurat, ada pertumpahan darah. Jadi saya kumpulkan semua orang saya. Waktu tu di bawah saya ada keluarga Cina dan India. Saya tanya mereka macam mana, nak duduk diam-diam dalam kampong atau bagaimana? Semua setuju tak mahu gaduh, jadi kami sama-sama jaga kuarters dan kampong. Waktu itu polis pun tak boleh tolong, mereka suruh jaga kampong masing-masing. Bekalan makanan pun terputus"

Latif dan rakan-rakan berjaya mengawal kawasan mereka termasuklah kampong yang berhampiran iaitu di Sg Besi dan Salak Selatan. Tiada pertumpahan darah yang berlaku. Latif mengetuai kumpulan mereka untuk mendapatkan bekalan makanan sehingga ke Jalan Salahuddin (berhampiran Bank Negara sekarang).

Kemudian beliau dijemput ke Parlimen untuk menerima surat penghargaan dan dilantik sebagai Ahli "Jawatankuasa Muhibbah" under MAGERAN, Majlis Gerakan Negara pada tahun 1967.

"Jadi macam tulah Surati, Merdeka bukan senang, banyak yang sengsara dan terkorban, terutamanya masa waktu Jepun dan waktu komunis.

Di sebabkan keadaan yang tertekan dan terdesak, kita mula berfikir ke hadapan. Macam saya katakan, kekejaman Jepun telah membuka minda orang Melayu waktu itu" beliau mengakhiri perbualan kami.

Menariknya, terdapat banyak fakta yang tidak diketahui oleh saya sebelum ini telah diceritakan oleh Tuan Hj Latif Yahya semasa perbualan tempoh hari. Kini saya tahu Merdeka bukan sahaja untuk meyakinkan British bahawa kita boleh memerintah sendiri, tetapi lebih daripada itu.

Sebagai generasi muda, kita pasti tidak dapat menyelami perasaan jika melihat ada ahli keluarga yang diseksa dengan kejam di depan mata atau melihat penderitaan lain. Terpulanglah pada diri masing-masing untuk lebih faham makna dan erti "KEMERDEKAAN"....

Hj Abd Latif bin Yahya dilahirkan pada 11 July 1936 di Jelebu, Kuala Klawang Negeri Sembilan. Berumur 69 tahun dan mula mendapat pendidikan awal semasa zaman pemerintahan Jepun. Beliau kemudiannya menyambung pelajaran di Sek Keb Pradong dan seterusnya di Sekolah Ingggeris Jelebu, N. Sembilan serta Sekolah Menengah Mahmud, Raub Pahang. Pada tahun 1955, beliau berhijrah ke Kuala Lumpur untuk bekerja. Pada waktu itu beliau turut belajar secara sambilan di Guon Institut, Kuala Lumpur. Pada tahun 1960 beliau memasuki Jabatan Kerja Raya (JKR) Selangor dan sekarang beliau merupakan penasihat Sg Long Industries Sdn Bhd.



"We are not poor, we have enough food but we suffered mentally and emotionally..."

Tai Beng Hoe

If it was not due to timing clashed, I have got the interview done earlier, without having to continue the next day. I knew this soft spoken person, few years back without realizing his touched memoir of the older days.

"We are not poor, had enough food to eat and clothes to wear but we suffered a lot..., it was very bad and he went through,.." I just looked at him to understand what he meant.

"After the Japanese occupancy, life was so hard. Everywhere in Kampar, the Japanese were killing and torturing people. As we could not stand anymore, all of us (10 in the family) walked to Teluk Intan from Kampar, without bringing anything except clothes. On our way, we re-treated at a rubber estate called Air Kuning for a night. Finally, we passed through a Malay village (in a middle of jungle called Kampong Segi) and stayed there for nearly 2 years. We planted "padi bukit", "keledek" and "ubi kayu" for food." He started the conversation.

When the Japanese surrendered, they returned to Kampar and with 5 dollar notes of British currency, started their life again. "In order to earn for a living, both my mother and I worked as labourer and our first job was to hammer the rock. We were paid a mere 50 cents a day.." he added.

For the first time and at the age of 10, Tai went for school at ACS Boys School, Kampar. Thereafter, at the age between 17-18 years old, he went to Kuala Lumpur alone and enrolled Methodist Boys School and attained his Senior Cambridge.

Aspired and motivated by the speech of the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock, he is determined to devote his services and loyalty to the country

Therefore, in 20 May 1957, he joined the public services and was attached to Ministry of Information, as an Information Officer. His initial task was to disseminate correct information to public as well as to educate them.

Among his first duty, which was unforgettable was when he was sent to London; to standby to any request of the Malayan negotiation team who consisted of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, the late Tun HS Lee, the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock, the late Tun Omar Ong, the late Dato' Abd Razak Husin and others. Back to Malaya, he followed them to announce the independence at Batu Berendam, Melaka and Kelab Selangor, Kuala Lumpur.

"When I listened to "Negaraku" for the first time, I feel sad and touched. Finally we had our own country, many of us shed tears, when the Federation flag replaced the Union Jack.."

After 31st August 1957, everyone enjoyed their days, but unfortunately, the communist influences were sneaking into the country.

Again, Tai was assigned with another duty which was mainly to persuade the communist to surrender. For this campaign, he was sent to Pahang State.

"We went to Kuala Lipis, Jerantut, Palai, Ulu Tong, Damak, Raub to call for the communists to come out and surrender themselves..... I think, because I was born in the 7th days of Chinese New Years, I had my luck there. In one of the occasion, I was traveling by "Korubo" to distribute pamphlets and leaflets into jungle to the communists. I went for the first trip, in Korubo flight. When we came back, the next team took off. The whole team perished when the aircraft crashed. Some said they were shot by the communist. I'm not sure, anyhow, thank to God, my luck was there...."

"In Jerantut, every morning we gathered at police station, ada satu committee jaga, hari-hari kena tengok dan cam mayat.. orang mati kena tembak, kena torture dengan communist.. one day, I found out that my good friend was one of the victims".

Tai had put himself in danger in numerous occasions while calling for the communist to surrender. "We normally went out in a group of 5-7 people, myself, the assistant with PFF (Police Forces team), we went into the jungle and call them. Last place was at Broga, Balakong..." he added.

"You went into the jungle and called them? Can't they just come out and shoot at you? I asked him with unbelievable looked at him.

Nodding his head, he replied "ya... bila-bila masa dia boleh tembak kita, sebab tu saya ada pistol, 5-bullet polis kasi, tapi bukan senang, the government has asked us earlier, are you willing to do or not, if not, they won't forced you because they knew the task was dangerous..," he replied.



Tai in Jerantut, Pahang during "ikrar taat setia" by the public

Apart from the said, he was also involved in the campaign to persuade the Sabahan to enter Malaysia in 1963 when he was transferred to Sabah.

"Merdeka is just not about Malaya, the hardship, before and after that people faced and suffered. After Merdeka, we faced the difficulties with the communist. We are not poor, we are not suffered because of money but we are tortured emotionally and mentally." ending the conversation with me.

Mr Tai Beng Hoe was born on 30th January 1936. In Chinese calendar he is at 71++ years old. Being born on the All Men's day, the 7th day of Chinese New Year, he was glad to carry them with him. He started his career as Information Officer in Ministry of Information in 1957 and continued to be a Press Secretary to Tan Sri Saadon Jubir in Sabah.

He worked with many Ministers like Dato' Ghani Gelong, Richard Ho, Man Hon Kam, Chin Hon Yen and the final was Dato' Chan Siang Sun, in 1989. Knew the late Tunku Abd Rahman personally and the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock, who had inspired him to involved in politics very much. He was conferred awards by Sultan Selangor in recognition of his services in Selangor State and currently, he is attached to Malaysian Quarry Association.

Editor would like to thank Tuan Hj Latif Yahya and Mr Tai Beng Hoe for giving us their full support. Thank you and Best Wishes to everyone.

SELAMAT HARI MERDEKA ke-48 !!

(this article will be included in the 30th Anniversary special Publication)