



# MALAM MESRA

## MARCH 13 2010

The objectives of the **Malam Mesra** in Kuala Lumpur was to bring Penang Datos based in Kuala Lumpur closer to Datos based in Penang. It was also an opportune time to network and share the achievements of the Majlis with a wider sector of the community. Dato' Vaseehar Hassan bin Abdul Razack was appointed Chairman of the Majlis. His committee comprised Dato' Shaik Sulaiman, Dato' Zainul Azman, Dato' Hj Abdul Razak Majid, En. Shaik Aqmal and Cik Shaheen Zaffar. Special invited guests and donors were Dato' Krishman Tan from IJM Corporation Berhad, Dato' Lau Kim Khoo and Datin from Multi-Purpose Insurans, Dato' Abdul Halim bin Harun and Datin from Northport (Malaysia) Bhd. Individual donors were Dato' Anwarrudin Ahamad Osman and Datin and Tan Sri Zain Ibrahim Zain and Datin. Dato' Seri Kalimullah attended as Corporate Sponsor, ECM Libra Foundation Chairman. ECM Libra Foundation donated RM50,000 to three schools in Penang selected by TYT, namely St. Nicholas Home, SMKT JI. Sungai and Penang Free School. TYT and Toh Puan attended as Guests of Honour of the Majlis. Altogether about 120 attended the dinner held at Westin Hotel.

The evening began with the arrival of guests entertained to cocktails before the arrival of TYT and Toh Puan. The affair began half an hour late due to a faulty lift which jammed with the guests of honour, TYT, Toh Puan and some members of the Majlis's committee in it. TYT and Toh Puan however were in good spirits after the rescue and

guests clapped in appreciation when he walked in.

The entertainment arranged by Nostalgia Klasik Enterprise was spectacular and the music of Ahmad Nawab was perfect for Penangites who have romanticised visions of old Penang. Speeches by Dato' Markend Joshi, the President and Dato' Vaseehar Hassan, the Chairman were well received. The food was good served as a gigantic *nasi campur* fine dining which went down very well with guests.



TYT Tun Abdul Rahman Abbas in good spirits in the Jammed lift. Next to him is Datin Juriah, wife of Dato' Sheik Sulaiman.

The evening ended at 11.15 pm after TYT and Toh Puan went round the tables to greet guests which was deeply appreciated.



Greeting TYT at Majlis Malam Mesra

The writer was stuck in the lift with TYT and Toh Puan and witnessed his gentlemanly character. Although we asked Toh Puan and him to be rescued first, he refused and waited until all the women had left the lift. He was gracious, charming and dignified, even under such stressful circumstances.

I will always remember Tun for this-a gentleman before a statesman.... Wazir Jahan Karim.

# PATRON of the MAJLIS



The current Governor of Penang or Yang Di Pertua Negeri is Tun Haji (Dr) Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas the seventh Governor of Penang. He was born on April 15 1938 at Kampung Permatang Rambai, Kepala Batas. He was appointed Yang di Pertua Negeri Pulau Pinang, on April 17 2001 and reappointed on May 1 2005 and May 1 2009. He is married to Toh Puan Majimor Shariff and has four children.

Tun Haji (Dr) Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas studied at the Permatang Sintok Malay School and at the Sultan Idris Teachers College (now UPSI) at Tanjong Malim. He took a course in teaching at the Language Institute (LI) in Kuala Lumpur and subsequently pursued his undergraduate studies in University of Malaya where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1973. He joined UMNO as a member of the Executive Council of Youth, UMNO Belia (1975-79) and became division treasurer from 1995 to his appointment as governor. In 1977, he was elected to the Penang State Assembly in a by-election, following the death of Ahmad Badawi Hj Abdullah, the father of the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Haji Abdullah Badawi. He served four terms in the State Executive Council before being appointed speaker of the State Assembly, in his last term. Tun has an amiable personality and is able to reach out to the masses with his wit and good humour. He is also a gifter orator and has a deep sentiment for social and cultural history. He believes that the young can seek inspirational knowledge on multi-culturalism and cosmopolitanism from the works of Penang's well known scholars like Zainol Abidin (BA London) and Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar who wrote for a multi-cultural readership.

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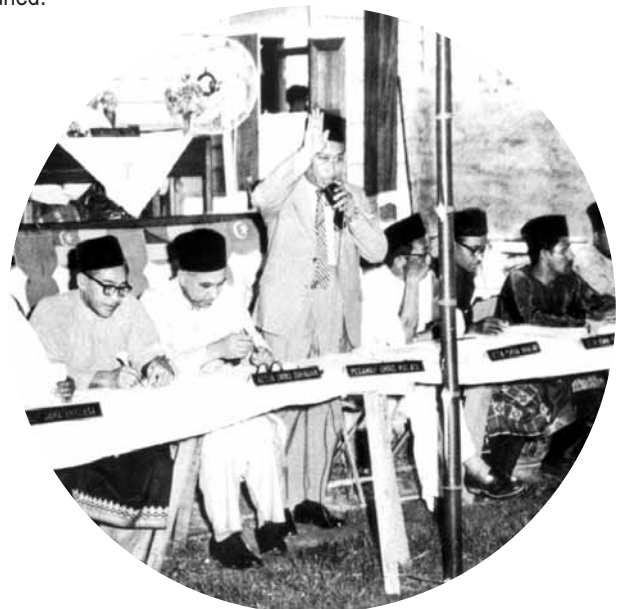
## PAST GOVERNORS OF PENANG

**Fourth Governor of Penang,  
Tun Sardon bin Haji Jubir**  
(S.M.M.N., P.S.M., D.U.P.N., S.P.M.J.)  
Governor from 1st of May 1975-1981

Tun Sardon was born in Rengit, Johor on March 19, 1917. He was the son of Tuan Haji Jubir bin Haji Mohd Amin, a well-known plantation owner and businessman in Johor who later became a *kathi* in Singapore. Sardon was educated at Raffles Institution in Singapore. At Raffles, he formed the Malay Literary Association with his colleagues, including Aziz Ishak, Hamid Jumaat and Ahmad Ibrahim. He contributed articles on the plight of the Malays to *Warta Malaya*, a leading Malay newspaper in Singapore. He was assisted by Aziz's brother Yusof Ishak, then a journalist who later became President of Singapore.

Tun Sardon pursued a career in Law in London and qualified as a Barrister from Lincoln's Inner Temple. He returned to Singapore in 1941 and had his practice in Singapore and later in Johor Bharu. Tun Sardon held the post of Minister of Health until 1972. He retired from politics in 1974 and was made Ambassador to the United Nations—a post then normally associated with retired politicians. In 1975, he was appointed Yang di-Pertua (Governor) of Penang. During his tenure as the Governor of Penang from 1975 to 1981, Sardon was concerned with the poor and needy in Penang, during the economic downturn and with the assistance of prominent businessmen and community leaders from Penang, the *Tun Sardon Foundation* was incorporated on June 13, 1978. The Foundation was registered as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital under the Companies Act 1965 to carry out charitable objects, including giving relief to the poor and needy, in particular the widows and orphans, victims of fire, floods, famine or other calamity and to those in need of moral or social rehabilitation or welfare.

Tun Sardon married Toh Puan Hajjah Saadiah in 1944. They had three sons and two adopted daughters. He passed away on December 14, 1985 and was buried at *Makam Pahlawan* near Masjid Negara, Kuala Lumpur, a mausoleum where many Malaysian leaders were buried.





# PAST GOVERNORS OF PENANG

## Fifth Governor of Penang,

### Tun Datuk Dr Hj. Awang bin Hassan

(S.M.N., D.U. P. N., S.P.M.J., S.P.M.K.)

Governor from the 1st of May, 1981- 30th April 1989

Born on 4 November 1910 (according to Dr. Luqman Mazlan) in Muar, Johor, Tun Awang received his early education at Sekolah Bukit Zahrah in Johor Bahru. In 1931 he entered KEVII College of Medicine in Singapore and in 1936, graduated from KEVII College of Medicine, Singapore. From 1936-61, he was a Member of the Medical Service Malaysia – Singapore.

He was a doctor before and after WW2 and became an O&G specialist in Kandang Kerbau Hospital in Singapore. He then opened his own clinics in Johor and joined politics. He was a Member of Parliament (MP) for Muar and played a part in the formation of UMNO together with his brother-in-laws - Dato Suleiman and Tun Dr Ismail. He was reelected in 1964 as Member of Parliament for South Muar, Johor. From 1964-69, he was appointed to the Senate of University of Malaya. In 1966, he was a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee - Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill and Member of the Royal Commonwealth Government and attended the Commonwealth Conference in Ottawa, Canada. On June 1, 1966, he was appointed a member of the National Family Planning Board and in 1966-72, a member of the Central Housing Trust. In 1968, he attended the Conference of International Union of Local Authorities in Bangkok. In 1969, he again saw victory as Member of Parliament for South Muar, Johor. On December 12 1972-5 and February 1973, he was the Deputy Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat, Malaysian Parliament He was appointed Malaysian High Commissioner to Australia from September 1973-81.

In 1974, he attended the General Assembly of the United Nations as a Malaysian delegate. In 1977, he was awarded the title Seri Paduka Mahkota Johor (First Class) which carried the title "Datuk". On May 1 1981, he was appointed Fifth Head of State (5th Governor of Penang or *TYT Yang Dipertua Negeri Pulau Pinang Kelima*) by His Majesty DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang DiPertuan Agong. His Majesty Sultan Abu Bakar of Pahang was the DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang DiPertuan Agong while Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed was the Prime Minister, when Tun Datuk Dr. Haji Awang bin Hassan was the 5th Governor of Penang.

Tun has always been admired for his warm personality and powerful leadership qualities. He retired as Governor in 1989 and at the age of 79 and returned to Johor Bahru after his retirement. He passed away at age 88 years on October 23, 1998. He had two sons who are surgeons, Dr. Yahya Awang and Dr. Hussein Awang. Tun Datuk Dr. Haji Awang bin Hassan was succeeded by Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir, the 6th Governor of Penang.

Acknowledgements to Dr. Luqman bin Mazlan [grandson of Tun Datuk Dr. Haji Awang bin Hassan]



## Sixth Governor of Penang,

### Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir

(S.M.N, P.S.M., D.U.P.N., D.P.M.N, K.M.N)

Governor from 1st of May 1989- 30th April 2001

Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir was born in 1921 in Kuala Kangsar. He became the second Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) from 1976-1982 after embarking on a long career as an educationist in the public services in Malaysia. His was a teacher and became the headmaster of Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman, Ipoh, Perak. In addition he also worked in the Ministry of Education as the Senior Assistant in the Department of High Schools, Chief Invigilator of Examination Syndicate Board, Senior Assistant Secretary in the Department of Scholarships and Training and Senior Education Advisor to the Director of Education. After his retirement, he was appointed Vice-Chancellor, USM, Permanent Representative and Malaysian Ambassador to the UNESCO in Paris and His Excellency Yang di-Pertua of Penang (1989- 2001).

Tun Hamdan 's father, Sheikh Tahir Jalaluddin (1869-1956) was a famous Muslim *ulama* in Southeast Asia. Tahir Jalaluddin was born in Ampek Angkek, Agam, West Sumatera on 8 December, 1869 and was an *Arab Peranakan* of Minangkabau-Hadrami ancestry. He was one of six children of the sixth wife of Sheikh Tahir – his mother was Aishah bte Hj. Mustafa, the daughter of a businessman from Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Tun Hamdan however was educated in the colonial tradition and studied at Raffles in University of Malaya, Singapore. His wife, Toh Puan Zainab was a Malay Kirby trained teacher and shared many similar interests with him in education and scholarship. He passed away in 2004 in Penang and was buried among statesmen in the State Mosque at Penang.





Yee Sang at Dato' Seri Khoo Keat Siew's Chinese New Year Party, 18 February 2010. Yee Sang is a Malaysian creation and symbolises unity within diversity.



Council Members & Guests.

## MAJLIS ACTIVITIES JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2010

### January 7:

Courtesy Call to YBhg. Dato' Zainal Rahim Seman  
State Secretary of Penang .

### February 22:

Teh Tarik dialogue with CPO and Networking  
with CPO Office, Seri Mutiara.

### March 13:

Malam Mesra, Westin Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

### June 19:

Annual General Meeting, Evergreen Laurel Hotel, Penang.

### July 23:

Malam Penaung, Traders Hotel, Penang

### August 7:

Cocktails for Newly Conferred Datos'







*Dialogue with Y.Bhg. Dato' Zainal Seman, State Secretary, Penang.*



*Dato's and Datins at Majlis Malam Mesra.*



*Datin Tum handing over ang pows at her party.*

*Dialogue with our Patron T.Y.T.*

*Dato' Kenny Ong and Dato' Markend Joshi and Datin at Kenny's Chinese New Year Party Evergreen Laurel Hotel 16 February 2010.*



*The Grand Banquet Hall in the compound of the palace at Alor Star. Penang States hopes to build one of similar stature in the coming future.*



*Dato' Ahmad Nawab performing at Majlis Malam Mesra.*

# SHEIKH TAHIR JALALUDDIN (1869-1956)

Sheikh Tahir Jalaluddin (1869-1956) belajar ilmu falak di Universiti Al-Azhar, Mesir selama 4 tahun (1314 -1318 H. bersamaan 1893-1897 M.). Semasa di situ beliau dipengaruhi oleh pemikiran Sayid Jamaluddin Al-Afghani dan Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, tokoh Gerakan Isiah (Pembersihan) dan reformasi Islam. Mereka telah cuba membersihkan Islam daripada fahaman yang bercampuran adat-resam kuno. Tujuan mereka ialah mengembalikan Islam ke landasan al-Qur'an dan Hadith yang suci. Ahli-ahli reformasi ini juga adalah 'nasionalis' yang tidak dapat menerima penjajahan atau imperialisme sebagai sistem politik yang sah dan patut. Lantaran kegiatan Sheikh Muhammad Tahir yang berkait dengan pemikiran reformasi inilah, beliau dikenali juga sebagai *ahli 'Kaum Muda'*-golongan ulamak Reformis di kalangan masyarakat Melayu-Nusantara.

Semasa di Mesir beliau mula berdampingan dengan tokoh-tokoh perjuangan Islam yang anti-British seperti Sheikh Muhammad Rashid Ridha. Rashid Ridha bergiat dalam penulisan rencana-rencana melalui akhbar yang berunsur Islam, seperti *Al-Manar*. Sheikh Muhammad Tahir pernah juga menyumbangkan rencana-rencana ilmiah dalam akhbar tersebut. Pendekatan seperti ini telah beliau terapkan sekembalinya ke Tanah Melayu, dengan membuat banyak sumbangan kepada majalah-majalah *Al-Imam* dan *Al-Ikhwān*. Beliau juga berkenalan dengan Syed Sheikh Syed Ahmad Al-Hadi yang menyunting dan menaung majalah-majalah ini, termasuk majalah *Saudara*.

Dalam zaman mudanya, Sheikh Tahir kerap berulang-alik ke Makkah dan Mesir, sama ada untuk membawa jemaah haji dari Sumatra ataupun untuk membuat perniagaan secara sampingan. Perkahwinan Sheikh Muhammad Tahir semasa zaman mudanya di Sumatra tidak kekal. Beliau telah bernikah dan bercerai sebanyak 5 wanita semasa itu. *Adat perpatih* Minangkabau sangat mendorong para wanita memperolehi zuriat daripada 'alim ulamak. Walau bagaimanapun, sistem *adat perpatih* adalah di antara sebab-sebab Sheikh Tahir berpindah keluar dari daerah Minangkabau dan merantau ke Tanah Melayu pada 1317H/ 1899.

Perkahwinan Sheikh Muhammad Tahir pada 21 Jamadilawal 1317 H. bersamaan 28 September 1899 M., dengan isterinya yang keenam bernama Aishah binti Haji Mustafa, anak seorang saudagar dari Kuala Kangsar, Perak kekal sehingga akhir hayatnya. Mereka dikurniakan dengan enam orang anak- iaitu Rahmah, Muhammad, Ahmad, Azizah, Hamdan dan Hamid. Menerusi asuhan ibu yang berdidikasi, didikan Sheikh Tahir yang unik, kemudahan pendidikan bercorak baru dan bakat serta rezekinya sendiri, maka anak Sheikh Tahir yang kelima, Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir terus meningkat dalam dunia pendidikan sehingga menjadi Tuan Yang Terutama Yang diPertua Negeri Pulau Pinang.

Sebagai ulamak dan pejuang agama, beliau mempunyai semangat anti penjajah yang kuat, di samping mempunyai pendirian yang tegas dan keras dalam hal-hal keagamaan. Inilah di antara aspek peribadinya yang menyebabkan Sheikh Tahir tidak dapat menetap lama di sesuatu tempat, di samping adanya pergeseran dengan golongan ulamak *kaum tua*.

Beliau telah menjadi *Hakim Besar Mahkamah Syariah* di Taiping, kemudiannya terlantik sebagai *Mufti Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan* selama 3 tahun, dalam zaman pemerintahan Sultan Idris. Walau bagaimanapun, fatwa-fatwa Sheikh Tahir tidak diterima oleh ulamak

golongan *kaum tua*. Beliau berkhidmat dengan negeri Johor Darul Takzim pada tahun 1335 H. (1914 M.), sebagai

*Pendidik dan Nazir* sekolah-sekolah agama Johor selama 4 tahun; dan sekali lagi selama 3 tahun (1346-49 H./ 1925-28 M.). Dalam lingkungan masa yang sama, beliau sempat berkhidmat sebagai *Mudir (guru besar) Madrasah Haji Muhammad Taib*, di Parit Jamil, Muar -- iaitu sebuah sekolah menengah agama yang memberi pengajaran-pembelajaran Islam yang menyeluruh sambil menekankan bahawa Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Arab dan Bahasa Inggeris hendaklah dipelajari untuk menambahkan ilmu pengetahuan. Dalam dunia pendidikan Sheikh Tahir sentiasa mempunyai pemikiran dan pandangan yang jauh ke hadapan daripada pemikiran semasa dalam zamannya. Sheikh Tahir pernah bermastautin di Singapura untuk memberi sumbangan penulisan dan penerbitan majalah *Al-Imam*. Beliau berkhidmat di *Madrasah Al-Masyhoor* Pulau Pinang sebagai *Pendidik dan Pengetua* selama 3 tahun (1341-44 H./ 1920-23 M.), kemudian pulang ke Kuala Kangsar.

Sheikh Tahir ke Makkah sekali lagi pada tahun 1349 H. (1928 M.), kemudiannya bersara di Kuala Kangsar, Perak mulai tahun 1350 (1929). Namun begitu, beliau terus aktif sehingga akhir hayatnya sebagai ulamak-penulis dan ahli falak Syar'i yang menabur khidmat baktinya kepada ramai penuntut yang kemudiannya menjadi ulamak.

Sheikh Muhammad Tahir telah melahirkan karya-karya yang meliputi beberapa bidang. Yang paling penting dari sudut falak Syar'i ialah *Kitab Natijatul'Umur* (diterbitkan pada tahun 1357 H./ 1936 M.) iaitu kira-kira untuk *Taqwim Hijrah* dan persamaannya dengan *Taqwim Miladi (Masehi)*, hala kiblat, dan waktu solat untuk sepanjang zaman; dan *Kitab Jadual Pati Kiraan* iaitu panduan untuk menentukan waktu solat dan arah kiblat berserta logaritms untuk mengiranya (diterbitkan pada tahun 1362 H./ 1941 M.).

Sheikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin Al-Falaki Al-Azhari telah kembali ke rahmatullah pada pagi Jumaat 21 Rabiulawal 1377 (bersamaan 26 Oktober 1956) pada usia 87 tahun, dan dikebumikan di Tanah Perkuburan Jalan Baru, Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Jabatan Muzium Negara Malaysia telah mengistiharkan tempat pemakaman beliau sebagai makam bersejarah untuk memperingati jasa beliau. Kini Kerajaan Negeri Pulau Pinang menamakan sebuah Pusat Observatori di Pantai Acheh Pulau Pinang sebagai Pusat Falak Sheikh Tahir, bagi memperingati peranan dan ketokohan beliau dalam bidang Falak.

Pusat Falaq Sheikh Tahir yang mengambil sempena nama beliau terletak di Pantai Acheh Pulau Pinang tempat cerapan hilal dan kajian falaq.

## Sumber

- Cenderamata Majlis Memperingati Tokoh/ Ulama Islam Silam 1976/ 77 Sheikh Tahir Jalaluddin (1869-1956) Fakulti Pengajian Islam, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (21 Februari 1977).
- Hamdan Hassan. Sheikh Tahir Jalaluddin, Pelopor Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam di Malaysia. Dalam Dewan Bahasa, 1973, 405-419.
- Mohd. Sarim Mustajab. Sheikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin al-Falaki: Pelopor Gerakan Isiah Islamiyah di Tanah Melayu. Dalam Malaysia in History. vol 20, no.2 (December 1977). 1-11.
- Raja Mohd. Affandi. Sheikh Taliir Al-Azhari, Pemimpin Reformis Islam. Dalam Dewan Masyarakat, Januari 1977, 35-37.
- Temubual dengan T.Y.T. Tun Dato'Seri (Dr.) Haji Hamdan bin Sheikh Tahir; pada 16 dan 20 September 1991 (bersamaan 8 dan 12 Rabiulawal 1412 H.) di "Seri Mutiara",

Ringkasan dari wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheikh\_Muhammad





Masjid Lebuah Aceh, Armenian St was a focal point of lectures and talks by Sheikh Tahir Jalaluddin

## Commentary

Sheikh Tahir Jaluddin, the father of Tun Hamdan Sheikh Tahir, was a central figure in the Islamic reformist movement in Southeast Asia. He was deeply influenced by other reformist scholars in Egypt like Sayid Jamaluddin Al-Afghani and Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, leaders of the Isiah Movement and Sheikh Muhammad Rashid Ridha who was strongly anti-British.

These thinkers contributed many articles on Islamic reformation, moving away from Arab orthodoxy, patriarchy and paternalism, at the same time using the Islamic voice as an indigneous symbol of political autonomy and freedom-from colonialism and imperialism. They were against orthodox Islamic leadership (the old group' or *kaum tua*) and became known as the 'young group' (*kaum muda*). The colonialists supported the 'old group' while the 'young group' were frequently censored and hunted down for their anti-colonial

stance. Magazines and bulletins like the *Al-Manar*, *Al-Ikhwān* and *Al-Imam* became the voice of resistance to othodoxy and imperialism and influenced many young minds in the Middle-East, Malaya and Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) to question the presence of Europeans as their masters. In this context, Penang, at Lebuah Aceh (Masjid Melayu Lebuah Aceh) and Al-Mashoor became a prominent centre for political resistance through social and political media and together with Syed Sheikh Syed Ahmad Al-Hadi, sought to transform young Muslim minds to think more progressively, away from political servitude towards autonomy.

These scholars did not reject the new Europeans languages which were beginning to transform formal education and scholarship. They felt that European education would open minds to a better understanding of the colonial process-how language became a source of political empowerment and domination; how the Eastern mind could be so easily subsumed through a psychological uncertainty about the goodness of everything local and indigneous. If we were to review the nationalist movement in Malaya and Indonesia, it would be right to start at this phase in Muslim intellectual history in Kuala Kangsar, George Town, Air Itam (Penang) and Johor. They greatly influenced the grass-roots movements of PAS and UMNO and inspired leaders like Onn Jaffar to lead Malaya towards independence. Their stand on linguistic empowerment through the European however did not go down so well with the Malays on the grass-roots. They rejected everything European and were determined to restore Malay language, history and heritage to its central place in Malaya. Middle-class urban Malays however kept up this tradition; hence the concern for English education among urban Malays, Tamil Muslims, Arabs and Pakistanis. Tengku Abdul Rahman, a Malay aristocrat educated in England, was a component of this urban English educated elite, who supported independence, yet felt that the best way to reach it was through conciliatory agreement rather than political resistance

... Wazir Jahan Karim

## History of Muslim Philanthropy and Welfare in the Straits of Malacca: How the Arabs and Tamil Muslim developed Early Muslim Civil Society

The Arab and Indian Muslim diasporas in the Straits of Malacca in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries challenged the European hegemonic system of 'occupation and rule' (Abu-Lughod 1989; Chaudhuri 1990). They traded with indigenou communities without claiming rights of sovereign ownership although they could with their advantage over maritime culture, language, religion and politics claim these rights of ascendancy. This enterprise had an early medieval history (Rougeulle 1996) – they had control over navigational routes and shipping from the eight century and at least a century before the European discovery of the spice trade of the Far East (Graham 1967; Di Megglio 1970). Nevertheless, they amassed wealth, assumed citizenry and patronage over most of the local communities of the Straits and the islands of the Malay Archipelago.

In return, the Malays in the Malay peninsula (*Semenanjung Melayu*) and East coast of Sumatra expected them to be generous and this was instituted through a system of trusteeships. These trusteeships were mostly developed around the mosque as a beacon of Muslim education, civility and leadership (Abubakar and Bamualim 2006; Rokiah Talib 2009). Schools also became centres of Islamic socialisation, focusing on vernacular education and tutelage. Social networks intensified around these teaching-learning centres and the communities provided value-added social capital centred on institutions of rites de passage and feasting (Karim 1992).

These networks also provided different kinds of social benefits and welfare such as the adoption of poor children to ward off social poverty, pooling of resources for the aged in the form of nucleated residences (*pondok*), endowments (*wakaf*) for the construction of cemeteries, schools and mosques and the pooling of funds for expenses relating to funerals, illness, spoilt harvests and further education in Islamic centres abroad<sup>ii</sup>. These 'communities of trust' (Clarence-Smith 1997; 2004) based on values of distributive justice and generalised reciprocity (Karim 1992) suited the local palate for strategic patronage but mercantile capitalism accompanied these good deeds and promoted philanthropic institutions which had added value. Philanthropy enabled Muslim migrants to engage in status production which enriched global connectivity in business and commerce

... Wazir Jahan Karim.

### NOTE

From as early as the eighteenth century, Malay, Madurese and Acehnese religious leaders travelled to Mecca, Damascus and Cairo to study Arabic and Islam and most of these trips were sponsored by villagers. This became a kind of welfare scholarship with religious leaders returning to open Arab-Malay schools (*pondoks*) to educate the children of those who had sponsored them. Many of these educated young boys and girls subsequently followed their families to Mecca and Medina and established the first *Jawi Arab* communities in the Arabian Peninsula. This has had an effect on the lingua franca of trade in Mecca and Medina where *Bahasa Batawi* or Malay was and remains the second most important language after Arabic. Currently signboards in Mecca and Medina are in Arabic, Indonesian, English, French and Spanish but most traders are able to speak Indonesian fluently. Indonesians also account for the largest numbers of pilgrims in the Holy Land.

# The History of the Malay States and Datoships

From time immemorial, the Malays have had a very illustrative history of titleships and have defended this history with pride and dignity. While the British successfully destroyed the last bastion of aristocracy of the Hindu and Muslim Mogul kingships in India at the height of the colonisation of India in the nineteenth century and the Dutch similarly in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the Malays resisted all attempts of the British to form the Malayan Union in 1946. The Malayan Union was an attempt to remove all sovereign rights of the Malay sultans including their rights to bestow titles to commoners, to elevate them to the level of aristocrats in the Malay Sultanate. As a result of intervention from the newly formed Malay party or United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), which also led the nation into independence on August 31st 1957, Malaysia is one of the most 'titled' nations of the world, with a growing number of people who can claim to be part of the 'aristocratic' component of Malaysian society.

No doubt all nations have national awards bestowed to citizens of great prominence but few nations have the privilege of a history which spans the Indic, Buddhist and Muslim civilisations of over thousands of years. Penang, like Melaka is a legacy of the Straits Settlements and was subject to direct British rule; Melaka lost its Sultanate when it fell to the Portuguese in 1511 while the Kedah Sultanate lost Penang when it was occupied by Captain Francis Light in 1786 and subsequently leased in perpetuity. These States do not have a Sultan as an official head of State but the Governorship is bestowed the highest status in the State with the honorific title of *Tuan Yang Terutama* (T.Y.T.), lit. The "First Sir" or the "Most Eminent". All titles at all levels are awarded by Sultans or Governors while on the Federal level, the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* or King ("his Majesty") bestows awards to commoners. Sultans, Governors and the *Yang di Pertuan Agong* have the absolute right to bestow awards to members of the royal family according to Malay tradition and citizens of eminence from other nations. They also have the absolute right to withdraw these titles from those who have disgraced or insulted the State or nation, through incitement, conspiracy or treason. Since independence in 1957, all titles and Datoships have been awarded on the basis of 'citizenship' rather than 'ethnicity' to demonstrate the assimilative and integrationist policy of Malaysia - the titles symbolically bring the Chinese, Indians and indigenous people under the umbrella of 'Malay Statehood' in respect of privileges and rights. These titles incorporate them into the "Malay Court", symbolically and ritually and they become loyal subjects of the Malaysian nation. This may be hard to understand in Penang which has a very secular Statehood with a clear Chinese prominence of Dato's but if one attends the Courtly functions of old Malay States such as Kedah and Perak, one can see how this works. Titled citizens of all ethnic communities sit on both sides of the royal family according to rank and seniority of title. Speeches of the Sultan contain messages of cooperation and goodwill or the Malay dialectics of *budi-jasa* ("reciprocity of good deeds") - good deeds done by citizens are rewarded with social recognition.

The titled citizen must be loyal to the State and cooperate in its success and productivity. In return, the titled individual enjoys high status and a position of prominence in society. In the Malay world, this must come with *kehalusan bahasa* or in English, "refinement-of speech", *sopan-santun* ("orderly conduct") and *budi-bahasa* ("cultured language and good deeds"). Malay Dato's traditionally cultivate the art of body language, oration, dressing and style, which is becoming of a Dato'; hence the strict dress code during the investitures and emphasis on formal dressing at all official functions. In Malay tradition, Dato's must perfect their speech and decorum and be generous and gracious at all times. In other words, it is a responsibility which comes with age, seniority and service. It is also a source of emulation or role modelling for the younger generation.

Of course, all Malays will say that the most important kind of 'dato' to be would be to qualify as a 'grandfather' (*Dato'*) or grandmother (*nenek; tok*). From this we gather that the real meaning of Dato' is "eldership" or "to be respected as an elder". Rank and file of age is highly important in the Malay world as it is in the Chinese and other Asian communities. To gain this status is a privilege and honour in one's community. The Chinese celebrate eldership as a 'rites de passage' of ultimate honour and success in health and wealth while the Indians bestow Godly qualities on respected elders. All in all, for those who have gained these titles through generosity, welfare and good deeds, their *budi-pekerti* ("good behaviour") shines through. As the Malay saying goes, "*Harimau mati meninggalkan belang, Manusia mati meninggalkan Nama*" (The tiger dies and leaves behind its stripes; the human dies and leaves behind his/her name).

However, the more important proverb which concerns Dato's would be "*Ikut resmi padi, makin berisi semakin tunduk*" or "Follow the way of the rice sheaf, the heavier it is, the more it bends".

Wazir Jahan Karim



After Malaysia's independence on August 31st 1957, YAM Tengku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first Prime Minister proposed that Malay titles should be bestowed on non Malays as a statement of loyalty, gratitude and unity to the formation of Malaysia.

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