

The Malaysian Bureaucracy

Four Decades of Development



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Foreword

My congratulations to the authors for writing this book on a topic which has not been widely researched, much less published in the past.

Yet, management is a subject very relevant to the socio-economic development of Malaysia. Public administration, in particular, is the vehicle for the planning and implementation of the Government's policies and programmes to develop this country. Very few works have been done on this subject in the past forty years since our Independence, least of which by Malaysians.

This book is not only written by Malaysians but by a combination of practitioners and the academia, a rare effort. Tan Sri Dr. Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad, has a long and distinguished experience in the country's civil service at the district, state and national levels as well as the Vice President of Petronas. He has been in the academia as well, having served as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya for a number of years. To add and strengthen the academic side is Professor Dr. Norma Mansor who has been with the Faculty of Economics and Administration of the University of Malaya for several years and was, until recently, the Head of the Department of Administration Studies and Politics. The third author, Dato' Dr. Abdul Kuddus Ahmad, is also an experienced administrator of some thirty years who has served in various capacities in the government service including a stint as Registrar of Institut Teknologi MARA (now UiTM). I would consider this a formidable combination on the subject of public administration.

Public administration in this country has not been spared of criticisms and controversy in all the forty years since Malaysia became an independent sovereign nation. This is unfair to our civil servants who have worked tirelessly managing the policies and programmes decided by a democratically elected Government. As recounted in this book, it is this public service that took over the task of administering this nation successfully from the colonial officers from *Merdeka* day, steered the country during the dark days of *Konfrontasi*, and spearheaded the country's development from agro-based to an industrializing nation. The progress of this country for the last forty odd years could not have been possible without the capability and dedication of its civil servants.

We have four decades of achievement and progress. The landscape of the country has changed in these years. So has the quality and productivity of our public service. Long queues and delays are things of the past. The counters of public-related agencies like Road Transport, Immigration, Registration, Local Authorities and hospitals are client-friendly and work like clockwork. Our public servants are professionals who manage this country during good times and bad. The tremendous growth, especially from the seventies to the nineties, and the success of overcoming the recession years in between, as well as the regional economic crisis of 1997, are testimony of their capabilities.

Looking ahead, I have no doubt this professionalism and capability will continue. The country faces tremendous challenges in the coming years. I am optimistic that our public service is capable of meeting them. I am also fully confident that it will help achieve our vision to be a developed country in 2020.

With the publication of this book, I would expect more to follow. We have several public and private universities in this country offering courses in management at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The text and reference materials are almost exclusively by foreign gurus citing hardly any cases involving Malaysia. Our country must also be the supplier, rather than the receiver, of knowledge on management and other subjects as well. We have the gurus and the experts on many disciplines in the institution of higher learning as well as the public and the private sectors.

I trust this book will be a source of reference for practitioners, faculty and students of public administration as well as the reading public.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abdullah Ahmad Badawi', with a date '8/5/2002' written below it.

DATO' SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI
Deputy Prime Minister, Malaysia

About the Authors



Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Hj. Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad has worked in many senior positions in the government and the private sectors. He has served in the Malaysian Civil Service for more than 25 years starting as an Assistant District Officer and rose to be the Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Public Enterprises.

He took an early retirement to join the National Oil Company (PETRONAS) as one of its Vice Presidents. He has served as Chairman and Directors of a number of listed and non-listed companies.

In the academia, he was a Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya for many years and now he is the President/Vice Chancellor of the Open University, Malaysia. He has been an Adjunct Professor for the Universiti Utara Malaysia and also was a Visiting Academic at the University of Southern California, USA. His many years of exposure to the world of work has made him a unique academic.

He has written a number of books on public administration and management, notably the **Pentadbiran Kerajaan dan Raayat** and **Developments in Public Administration and Management: Current Issues**.



Professor Norma Mansor is the Executive Director of the International Institute of Public Policy and Management. She teaches Public Administration and Governance to post-graduate students of the University of Malaya's Department of Administrative Studies and Politics. She consults and trains managers and administrators from the private and public sectors on strategic planning and policy development. Her other interests include public policy, organisational development and comparative management. Professor Norma Mansor has been a resource person for national and state level government organisations in Malaysia, the World Bank, the UNDP, and for numerous national and international organisations. She has published widely in the area of management and administration.



Dato' Dr. Abdul Kuddus bin Ahmad, born on Feb 14, 1939, graduated with BA (Honours) from the University of Malaya in 1964. He was awarded Master of Public Administration (MPA) by the University of Pittsburgh, USA, in 1973, followed by Ph. D. from the same university in 1981.

Dato Dr Kuddus joined the Malaysian Civil Service, the present PTD, soon after graduation in 1964. He first served as Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Education for five years before moving up to other positions in the Malaysian Government. Among them were as Registrar, Institut Teknologi MARA (ITM), Deputy Director General MAMPU, Director General of Civil Aviation and Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Agriculture. His last position before retirement in 1994 was as Senior Deputy Secretary General of the Prime Minister's Department. Upon retirement, he was appointed a member of the Public Service Commission for five years. In all he spent 35 years in the public service. Dato' Dr Kuddus then joined the academia. He was appointed a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Malaya in 1999–2000. He also taught post-graduate courses in management at the same university as well as Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Dedication

To my wife **Hashimah Hj. Ismail** and family members **Faizal, Sharifah Aishah, Mudzafar, Redza and Iskandar.**

Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Hj. Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad

To **Sam, Irfan and Hajjah Fatimah**, the loves of my life.

Professor Norma Mansor

To **Azizah, Don, Sabarina, Atifi, Danial and Arman**, the loves of my life.

Dato' Dr. Abdul Kuddus bin Ahmad

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