About RSOG

Founded in 2010, RSOG’s primary focus is to transform the public sector leadership towards excellence and to be a point of reference and a leading authority on public sector leadership and policy.

Its deliverables include customised knowledge skills development programmes for public sector leaders and the publication of refereed journals and other publications. Above all, RSOG provides an important ‘platform’ for dialogue, knowledge sharing and synergistic collaboration.

RSOG KEY ROLL-OUTS

Training & Development
- Enhancing leadership, public policy-making and analysis management capabilities of senior management professionals in the public service.

Knowledge Sharing Platform
- Providing a platform for knowledge-sharing and collaboration across all government sectors, and with the private sector.

Research & Consultancy
- Centered on understanding the current and future challenges faced in public service delivery and policy-making both locally and globally.

Major Thrusts of RSOG

- Development
- Leadership & Public Policy
- Federalism
- Multiculturalism

“...MANDATED TO TAKE ON THE CHALLENGE OF GROOMING THE FUTURE LEADERS... ACROSS ALL SERVICE SECTORS”.

Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, 08 October 2010

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The Newsletter is a quarterly publication for partners, friends and supporters of RSOG
Former Prime Minister Y.A.Bhg. Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad urged Malaysian leaders to take into account Malaysia’s peculiarities when leading the country in view of the fact that Malaysians are not only multi-racial but also “multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi religious and above all divided into different economic groups”. He stated that if this gap is not managed properly, it could create conflict, and later on might lead to violence. Tun Dr. Mahathir also pointed out that despite the diversity in all aspects, Malaysia has remained stable and “that is something that we must appreciate”.

He further stated that the most dangerous gap is economic, compounded by ethnicity. That, according to Tun Dr. Mahathir, is the biggest challenge for a leader. On the other hand, although factors such as race, culture and religion are unchangeable, the factor of distribution of wealth can be changed. Therefore a good leader must strive to reduce the difference between rich and poor, then “at least that factor can be removed”. Tun Dr. Mahathir was speaking to a select audience of about 35 people from both the public service as well as the private sector at the Leadership Forum on “the Malaysian Approach to Public Leadership”, organised by the Razak School of Government (RSOG). The Forum preceded an interactive questions and answer session wherein Tun Dr. Mahathir responded to questions related to current policies, democracy, press freedom, wealth creation and the need to master English as the language of technologies.

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The Secretary-General to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) Y. Bhg. Datuk Dr. Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria engaged in a dialogue with a group of stakeholders under MITI, NGOs and corporate organisations on the vision of her ministry as well as her own personal vision, and the challenges faced towards achieving them.

The aim of MITI is for Malaysia to be the preferred investment destination among the most globally competitive trading nations by 2020. As for her personal vision, Y. Bhg. Datuk Dr. Rebecca strives to be a better person than the day before by adhering to three values – integrity, laws that were more attuned to the more challenging security environment of an earlier era to suit the changing times.” This move marked an important milestone in the country’s political evolution in becoming a more mature democracy, Raja Dr. Nazrin said.
He said that today’s environment is much different than before, as the expectations of the people are getting more complex, diverse and constantly changing. Thus, the public service has no choice except to ramp up its capabilities to provide a more effective, speedier and more efficient delivery of services to the target groups. The Prime Minister stated that notwithstanding the country’s numerous successes, the government servants, including him are urged to challenge themselves to think of more creative and innovative ideas that can be put into practice. It should not be mere ‘business as usual’ but the government should look into all aspects that can be improved on, be it in terms of new ideas or internal processes within the departments and the government, or in terms of a new paradigm of doing business; i.e. the Business of Government.

The delivery of services must also be carried out with integrity.

He pointed out that for the global perception of a country’s image to change, reality had to first change and as such, the words and actions of the Government had to correspond and form the basis of a successful nation branding campaign.

The roundtable featured expert insights and interesting case studies on various current issues affecting national development and private sector branding. Present were Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Peter Chin Fah Kui, the Sa’id Business School Associate Dean Dr. Andrew White and KPJ Healthcare Berhad Managing Director Datin Paduka Siti Sa’diah Sheikh Bakir.

For our public sector to strive towards excellence and execute its plans effectively, it has to be based on the foundations of KNOWLEDGE and WISDOM.

He said that for the first time ever meeting and engaging session between THE PRIME MINISTER and LEADERS of GOVERNMENT sectors.

The Dialogue served as a cornerstone and platform for the Prime Minister and Deputy to hear views, suggestions and ideas which could be used as input for recalibration, if necessary, improvement, fine tuning and to review that which has been done to achieve the goals and objectives of national policies. The Prime Minister also engaged in a lively question and answer session with the audience.

He stated this during the inaugural Civil Service Premier Dialogue with 600 secretaries general of the ministries; heads of services; state secretaries and top ranking heads of departments from the federal, state, district and local authority levels.

PRIME

The Prime Minister expected “BIG, BOLD IDEAS” and “effective and speedy execution from the public service.

A country’s brand is a proclamation of existing strengths and not a statement of desire, stated Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin. Leaders of the public service, he said, were the most visible ambassadors of the nation’s brand.

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Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at the Oxford University (Oriental Institute, St Antony’s College) delivered a seminar focused on two main concepts - identity and diversity; breaking down the construction of identity and how identities are often fused with multiple dimensions.

Professor Ramadan propounded that identity is never closed or narrow; problems begin when one attempts to narrow it to a single identity. To avoid confusion, identity should be referenced from the religious, philosophical and/or ethical frames. In regard to the Islamic reference, the universality of Islamic principle is not only to be immutable but it is also to accept the changeable as part of the immutable. Diversity is God's will and it serves as a challenge and a necessity, whereby tolerance is the key to managing this challenge.

He also argued that the concept of identity and diversity, seen from an Islamic viewpoint is in need for a true jihad – as resistance and reform (resisting what is bad and reforming what is bad into something better or something good).

He concluded that one should be more assertive and positive about one's multiple identities. Thus one should celebrate diversity and pluralism as a state of being and personhood instead of being dictated by the need to classify the leaders must possess strong political will and the necessary merits namely the four “H”s: Hope, Humanity, Humility and Humour, and are focused on developing their successors as well as bring positive “ripple effect” to their organisation.

In ensuring the success of strategic change in the public service, the Razak School of Government and the University of Oxford’s Said Business School had designed a cutting edge executive programme on branding principles and practices that are strategic assets for most countries targeted for the senior public service officials of JUSA B level.

Lead by leading global experts on public sector brand strategy and management, the programme was deemed timely and crucial in the light of Malaysia’s Transformation Programmes that require public service leaders to possess personal leadership brands which will indirectly determine the brand of the public service, which in turn determines the nation brand.
TAPS: NURTURING EMERGING YOUNG LEADERS
in the Public Service

It was over a year ago, when a group of young graduates walked into the PETRONAS Leadership Centre and introduced themselves as TAPS associates. There were 43 of them, all graduated top of their class, from overseas as well as local universities. These associates, as they are called, are the crème de la crème among hundreds of Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (JPA) scholarship holders, selected based on their academic qualifications, co-curriculum excellence and leadership potential to be part of the “Talent Acceleration in The Public Service” (TAPS); a career development programme that consists of a 2 year placement with selected ministries and government agencies.

TAPS is one of the government’s newest efforts to reverse the brain drain in the country, jointly organised by the Public Services Department (JPA) with the Razak School of Government (RSOG) and TalentCorp with the aim to identify, source and cultivate talent for the public sector.

Reports by the World Bank, JobStreet and the Wakeup Call for Malaysia Group indicated an alarming rate of talent exodus to foreign countries for comparatively more lucrative salaries and higher quality of life. A survey by Wakeup Call Malaysia identified social injustice as the main reason for the 518 respondents leaving the country – one such issue is the lack of equal opportunity in tertiary education and hence professional careers in Malaysia.

Though TAPS was envisioned to bring home our JPA graduates from abroad, it also carries another important mission: to provide better talent in the public service through the fresh and vibrant perspectives and innovative ideas of the TAPS Associates needed to fuel and steer the country’s national transformation.

During its first year of implementation, TAPS encountered several challenges, most notably, the lack of information and publicity. This has affected public perception and stakeholders’ reception of the programme. Lack of understanding and awareness of the programme among public servants caused some degree of curiosity and scepticism. The associates, inadvertently, were subject to their peers and superiors’ scrutiny and expectations. Many rose to the occasion and found a new passion in serving the rakyat; some faltered and succumbed to work pressure or saw it as incompatible with their life purpose; while others saw their involvement as nothing more than a contractual obligation.

In coordinating the programme, RSOG witnessed an extraordinary commitment from all implementing partners. The team underwent vigorous levels of preparation in order to get the programme running. Associates’ resilience and professional capacity were nurtured and strengthened through a series of quarterly development programmes. The structure of the programme demanded associates to be independent and possess an above average intellect and mental strength to meet the expectations of their mentors, supervisors and peers. Many, if not all associates showed tremendous growth due to the programme.

The programme advocates new competencies necessary to turn public servants into innovative leaders and agents of change. These include personal resilience, critical ideas and innovative thinking that would add value to the public service as a whole.

The aspiration is for our young talent to recognise that their energy and vision are crucial to helm our country’s public sector and further the nation’s development thus paving the way for the next generation’s brighter future.
Dato’ Dr Zaininah bin Mohd Zain
Pengarah Kementerian Kesihatan.

RSOG has done very well in choosing this programme and Said Business School has the experience. There are a lot of unlearn and relearn sessions which help us to understand our strengths and potential to improve the existing gaps in management and leadership.

Mr M. Nagarajan A/N Marie Marie Chetty
Deputy Secretary General, Commodities
Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities.

"The Oxford programme was mind provoking and it opens up to new ideas to further enhance our delivering process and ensure that we remain competitive in this era."

Datuk Dr Mazlan bin Yusoff
Timbalan Ketua Pengarah, Unit Pembangunan Tadbiran dan Perancangan
Pengurusan Malaysia, Jabatan Perdana Menteri.

"The program assisted and helped me to improve my personal brand."

Dato’ Hj Zakaria bin Hj Jaffar
Timbalan Ketua Pesuruhjaya, Suruhanjaya Pencegahan Rasuah Malaysia.

"The program has increased my self-confidence in bringing changes into my organisation."

Mr M. Nagarajan A/l N. Marie @ Marie Chetty
Deputy Secretary General, Commodities
Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities.

"RSOG has done very well in choosing this programme and Said Business School has the experience. There are a lot of unlearn and relearn sessions which help us to understand our strengths and potential to improve the existing gaps in management and leadership."

Dato’ Dr Zaininah bin Mohd Zain
Pengarah Kementerian Kesihatan.

RSOG Masterclass : “The Leaders Within”,
| speaker: - Prof. Manfred Kets de Vries, Founder of Kets de Vries Institute.

INFO

For more information about the Razak School of Government, please feel free to contact us at:
Tel: +603 8888 4797 | Fax: +603 8890 2090
Email: info@rsog.com.my | website : www.rsog.com.my
Level 5, Menara Prisma,
No. 26 Persiaran Perdana, Presint 3,
62675 Putrajaya, Malaysia.

On the cover: "Advancing the Women Leaders in the Public Sector", speaker: - Ms. Anne Abraham, FOUNDER & CEO of LEADWOMEN.

"Post GE-13 Malaysia - Constructing an Inclusive Agenda for Nation Building”,
| speaker : - Y. Brig. Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria, Principal Research Fellow at the Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), UKM, and Secretary General of PROHAM (Society for the Promotion of Human Rights).

Senior Leadership Program : “Policy Leadership and Strategic Change Module”.
| In collaboration with University of Cambridge.

Public Policy Workshop : “Transforming A Nation - The Malaysian Experience”.

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