

# Chronicling the terror within

TV3 HAS PRODUCED  
A GROUNDBREAKING  
DOCUMENTARY  
SERIES ON THE  
MALAYAN  
EMERGENCY CALLED  
*JUNGLE GREEN*  
*KHAKI BROWN*

by **S. Indra Sathiabalan**

**THOUGH** many Malaysians now only know of it from history books, the Malayan Emergency, from 1948 to 1960, was a defining moment for the country as government forces battled the communists within the country.

Next year will be Malaysia's 50th year of independence, and to commemorate it, TV3 has come up with a documentary series that focuses on this crucial period in the history of Malaya.

The series is called *Jungle Green Khaki Brown* and it is based on the pictorial book *The*

*Malaysian Emergency Revisited: 1948 -1960* by Lt Kol (Rtd) Mohd Azzam Mohd Hanif Ghows.

The book was edited by Datuk Abdul Mutalib Razak, the CEO of Media Prima. According to Abdul Mutalib: "This is the first of the many series we want to work on between now and next year. It is to instill the spirit of patriotism and give a historical perspective of events like the Emergency to the younger generation, and also to inform the country at large that terror can strike a nation at any time.

"Malaya faced the communist insurgency for 12

years and we won the fight against terrorism. I think we are the only country in the world that managed to win the war against terror in what was essentially guerrilla warfare."

The series covers the era before World War II, the Japanese occupation, the formation of the MPAJA (Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army), which evolved into the Communist Party of Malaya, the start of the Emergency period and the tactics used to counter the communist insurgency.

The entire project took eight months. The primary material was from *The Malaysian Emergency Revisited: 1948 - 1960*.

Archival footage had to be obtained from sources like ITN London, The Imperial War Museum in London and several documentaries by the British government. Some footage was sourced locally, from the Malayan Film Unit. However, no reenactments were done.

The series, narrated by Joe Hasham, is in English.

*Jungle Green Khaki Brown* is perhaps the most comprehensive documentary series ever done about the Malayan Emergency. Divided into eight half-hour episodes, *Jungle Green Khaki Brown* features interviews with not only Malaysians who were in the thick of things during that era but also ex-soldiers and planters from Britain, Australia and Fiji.

"We can never forget that the Commonwealth troops came here to fight and some of them died for our freedom. In the history books, it is written that they were here to protect their

interests - fair enough. But by coming here, they were protecting their interests and us also. If they didn't come, we would be under the threat of communism still," said Abdul Mutalib.

Among the local leaders interviewed were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad, Yang Di Pertuan Besar Tuanku Ja'afar, Tun Haniff Omar and General Hashim Ali.

Former Communist party leaders such as Abdullah Sidi were also interviewed.

Abdul Mutalib said that TV3 plans to eventually condense the series into a two-hour programme and sell it overseas.

"We are not here to make money. We are here to give back to the nation what we feel they [Malaysians] should know and what they should be wary about. Terror can strike at any time, not only in the form of communism but also in other forms," said Abdul Mutalib.

He personally conducted some of the interviews and found that many of those who lived during that era were willing and wanted to contribute. He felt it was important to record all of them and archive the material.

For Abdul Mutalib, making *Jungle Green Khaki Brown* was a labour of love. He hopes that the public will watch this series and see how the war was won due to the efforts of many people.

*Jungle Green Khaki Brown will be aired every Monday at 7pm beginning today over on TV3.*