

Tun Sir (Colonel) Henry H.S. Lee (1901 - 1988), Politician/tin miner/banker

The H.S. Lee Private Archives consists of documents which include speeches, correspondence, committee reports, annual reports, financial statements, newspaper clippings, conference papers, newsletters, memorabilia and photographs mostly digital.

Tun Sir Henry Lee Hau Shik (H.S. Lee) was a key figure in the developments of Malaysia and Singapore from the 1930s to 1980s.

H.S. Lee was born in Hong Kong in 1901 but subsequently established himself in the 1920s as a major tin mine owner in Selangor and Perak. During the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, he was both a Colonel in the Nationalist Chinese Army and in the British Army in India. After World War II, Tun Lee was appointed to committees entrusted with rebuilding the Malayan economy. In 1946, he founded the China Press, a Chinese newspaper, with the intention to counter the Communist newspaper Min Sheng Pao and its propaganda. Tun Lee helped found the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) in 1949 and played a key role in forging an electoral alliance with UMNO in 1952 that later became the Alliance Party, now the ruling Barisan Nasional. As a prominent member of the Malayan Chinese community, Tun Lee was part of the Alliance mission led by UMNO President Tunku Abdul Rahman that held constitutional talks in 1956 in London, and he was the only Chinese signatory to the Malayan Independence Agreement. He was the Minister of Transport from 1955 to 1957 and served as the first Finance Minister of an independent Federation of Malaya from 1957-1959. He assumed the post of Financial Chairman for the Board of Commissioner of Currency, Malaya from 1959 to 1961.

Tun Lee was deeply involved in the Chinese guilds and clan associations, helping to form the Kwang Tung Association, Chinese Mining Association, and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Being an avid golfer, he was the President of the Federation of Malaya Olympics Council from 1957-59. He also contributed to the founding of the Lady Templer Hospital in 1960.

In 1966, Tun Lee established the Development and Commercial Bank (D & C Bank) which became Malaysia's fifth largest bank and he led the Bank till his death in 1988.