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Welcome Address

By

Ahmad Mustapha Hassan

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WELCOMING ADDRESS BY
BERNAMA GENERAL MANAGER, ENCIK AHMAD MUSTAPHA HASSAN
AT THE OPENING OF BERNAMA-AMIC SEMINAR ON
"COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES IN ASIA"
AT MING COURT HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR
AT 8 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 20, 1985

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1. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank YB Datuk Chan Siang Sun, the Deputy Information Minister of Malaysia who, despite his busy schedule, has consented to be with us here tonight to declare this seminar open.
2. Let me also express my warmest welcome to you, distinguished delegates and guests, to this capital city of ours. Kuala Lumpur, as you know, is now in the midst of busy preparation for the up-coming PATA Conference scheduled for April next year. It is my humble hope, therefore, that our friends from abroad will be able to spare a little bit of their time, while being here, to visit some of our interesting places.
3. On behalf of BERNAMA, I am very grateful to the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC) for choosing BERNAMA as the co-organiser and Kuala Lumpur as the venue of this important gathering. Indeed, we feel greatly honoured for this.
4. To me the timing of this seminar is perfect. This is also because we in Malaysia are moving past into the Information Age. During the past few months, the country has been accorded the privilege of hosting several gatherings of this nature, beginning with the Second ASEAN Editors' Conference in Penang in September.
5. Tonight's event represents another manifestation of our desire to see the rectification of the various "irregularities" -- if I may use that term -- in the World Information Order that we have been talking so much all this while. It is true that the subject of Communication and its related problems have been the themes of countless seminars, forums and conventions at International, Regional or National levels for over a decade. Yet the results of the various exhortations expressed at these gatherings, sad to say, have not met with the right results. No positive action is taken and, hence, reports remain as reports and at a later date become mere archival materials.

6. On Tuesday, 19 November, I presented our Prime Minister with a letter outlining the various decisions taken at the Second ASEAN Editors' Conference for the consideration of the government. I am glad that it was well received by the Prime Minister. For the first time, an Editors' Conference decided to set up a Secretariat to map out various actions necessary in order to bring to the notice of the right authorities the decisions of the Conference. The Conference Secretariat has decided to visit and present these decisions to all governments in the ASEAN region for their due consideration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. As you can see, we have among us here well-known names like Bapak Mochtar Lubis from Indonesia; Mr. Neville Jayaweera from World Association for Christian Communication, London; Mr. T.J.S. George of Asiaweek; Dr. Y.V. Lakshamana Rao from the Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Dr. Nora Quebral of the University of the Philippines; Mr. Vijay Menon of AMIC; Dr. Anura Goonesekera of Sri Lanka; and Mr. Suthichai Yoon from Thailand. I am fully convinced that with their reservoir of expertise and experience, these people will contribute positively towards the success of the seminar.

Thank you.

AMH/rza

November 20, 1985