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The Impact Of Broadcast Satellites On The Asia-Pacific Region

By

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IMPACT OF BROADCAST SATELLITE ON THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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The coming 21st century is expected to be the century of the Asia-Pacific, the region with high economic growth. This optimism in economic development for increased prosperity of the region will be realised only through better mutual understanding and closer cooperation among the member nations. Despite the diversity in geography, society and culture, in recent years a remarkable expansion of cooperation can be observed in political, economic, social and cultural activities. The currently increasing wealth of the countries in the region provides a clear evidence of this close cooperation.

Science and technology has had the most revolutionary impact on the history of mankind. The discoveries, inventions and innovations have revolutionised not only our way of living but also
our thoughts and understanding. Particularly, telecommunications and information technology, or info-communications, is having an increasingly indispensable role in the modern society. Telecommunications links become lifelines connecting governments, traders, farmers, and families simultaneously together. Wealth, health, and social harmony are enhanced by telecommunications.

Telecommunications becomes an essential part not only in fostering national integration but also in economic integration and regional cooperation. Current trends in regionally integrating and merging economies are:

- transnational collaboration among firms to develop and produce goods and services;
- cross-country investment;
- expansion of regional trade; and
- regional pooling and sharing of capital.

With rapid advances in technology, the real cost of telecommunications systems becomes lower year by year, including the
cost of receiving earth stations. And among telecommunications services, television has the greatest impact on revolution of social and cultural activities in our increasingly complex and progressive society. Moreover, the advance in space technology has made the role of television broadcasting even much more dramatic. Broadcasting via satellites in the geo-stationary orbit can cover not only a nation but the entire region.

Remarkable features of satellite broadcasting include not only the ability to serve a very large area, but also the ability to provide high quality services. In the terrestrial broadcasting services, reflections by tall buildings in the large cities and by mountains cause deterioration of pictures, while the satellite broadcasting can give good quality reception of television pictures. Furthermore, the satellite broadcasting is becoming an economical system. In the result, eventhough the initial cost in launching a satellite is high, because the cost of receiving earth stations is increasingly cheaper. Many countries in the region including Thailand can now produce them locally.
The advent of space technology has enabled the television broadcasting to serve homes in the region directly and simultaneously. This advanced information media will be definitely beneficial for social life and home life of the people. It will increase mutual dependence and cooperation in economic and social activities in the region. Individuals will know more about the cultural, economic and social status of other countries, which will lead to more pleasant regional harmony.

It is hoped that with proper cooperation in regional legal and political arrangements for transborder transmission of television pictures among the member nations, the satellite broadcasting will tremendously enhance the regional harmony. The dream of having the 21st century as the century of the Asia-Pacific with sharing prosperity and high quality of life of the people will then come true.