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Opening Speech

By

Law Hieng Ding

Title: Speech

Speech

2

UCAPAN OLEH Y.B. ENCIK LAW HIENG DING,

TIMBALAN MENTEI SAINS, TEKNOLOGI

DAN ALAM SEKITAR, MALAYSIA DI

UPACARA PENUTUP BENGKEL MEDIA MASSA

DAN PEMELIHARAAN PERSEKITARAN

PADA 10 OKTOBER, 1987, JAM 9.00 PAGI

BERTEMPAT DI HOTEL MERLIN, KUALA LUMPUR

Speech

Yang Berbahagia
Timbalan Naib Canselor UKM;

Wakil-Wakil Kedutaan Asing;

Y. Bhq. Encik E. Stottle;
Wakil dari Carl Duisberg Gessellschaft;

Wakil Asian Mass Communication Research
and Information Centre;

Ketua Jabatan Komunikasi;

Tuan-tuan dan Puan-Puan;

Pertamanya saya ingin mengucapkan terima kasih atas kesudian pihak penganjur mengundang saya ke majlis ini.

Keduanya, saya mengucapkan terima kasih kepada penganjur dan saudara sekalian yang telah memberikan perhatian kepada perkara yang sangat penting ini iaitu alam sekitar.

On behalf of the Ministry I would like to thank all of you for your effort in organizing this workshop. This workshop is timely and important to all those environment related issues. My Ministry regards this workshop to be very important as the participants are media practitioners who are able to convey to the public matters that are of common interest. The workshop will also benefit participants

- 3 -

from neighbouring Asean countries as they can understand the various similar environment-related issues found in Malaysia and in other countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Environmental problem is no longer a subject that anyone can just take lightly. It has become a very important issue. If we do not take it seriously now, the environmental pollution will have an adverse effect on many living creatures on earth. There is no one - no one else we could depend on to help us out with this problem except our-selves. Unfortunately, the only and the best way to tackle this issue is by having every individual, whoever and wherever he/she is to

- 4 -

commit himself in protecting the environment from pollution.

This is one of the most difficult tasks to deal with. We need to involve everybody in the battle against pollution, be they the policy makers, educators, scientists, school children, the parents, or the communicators. We just cannot afford to keep anybody ignorant of the issues of the day. We therefore have a major role to play in making people - the audience - aware of the effects the environment has on the ordinary people. We have to keep on finding ways and means to find alternatives to ensure the desired results.

We in Malaysia, have identified four major approaches in combating this issue. The

- 5 -

approaches are : research, communication, education, and implementation. All these must run simultaneously and must be handled with care and commitment by all quarters.

We need to conduct research to monitor every facet of the environment. Our scientists must be alert to any new health problems or adverse effects that may be caused by certain development activities. This would then enable the government to take speedy action.

Communication enables awareness to be instilled among the people. Readers of the mass media should be alerted to the hazards on the environment by such activities. The press should also take the initiative to highlight environmental issues that are detrimental to the people.

- 0 -

The function of education is to create an awareness amongst ^{the} young, and be appreciative of the environment. School children should be taught at an early age on the importance of environment for their survival and on the importance of sustainable developments.

Implementation of the rules and regulations that have been in existence should be stepped up so that those who constantly violate them would be dealt with appropriately. In this matter, I urge industries to cooperate with the authorities to keep their pollution level as low as possible. It is better for the industries to take preventive steps or otherwise face action when they violate or infringe any rules or regulations relating to environmental control.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Among the four approaches, communication and education are the most important but the most difficult to achieve as they deal with the masses. To educate and inform the masses, we need communication skill and knowledge, and it has to be a continuous process. People must be reminded often enough on the importance of the environment. On top of that, every campaign must be carefully planned so that it will achieve its primary purpose of inculcating civic consciousness of the environment. I urge you to make conscientious efforts to ensure that our communication channels and education programmes are fully implemented. The government alone cannot handle all these responsibilities. Participation from every

quarter, especially the mass media, practitioners, academicians and private sectors is most needed.

Allow me to make use of this opportunity to thank those who have contributed in their efforts to protect our environment. These people from the media, institutions of higher learning, the social groups and the private sectors have made positive contributions. However, there are still rooms for advancement. The tasks ahead of us is still heavy but it is not unsurmountable. The government hopes there will be many more international organisations like Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft and AMIC to come forward to actively support this type of endeavour. What AMIC, CDG and the Communication Department of

in terms of their impact on the environment and organisations are required to prepare an environment impact assessment report. I am happy to note here that most business and project organisations have been very responsive to this requirement.

However, it is regretted that some of these companies have failed to implement some of the suggestions from which the assessments are made. Infact, there are still some companies which do not make a follow up impact study after each project has been implemented. If this attitude continues it will certainly hamper our effort in protecting the environment. This Ministry will continue to monitor this sort of activities and to ensure this requirement is complied. We shall not

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia have done for the last 12 days are just exemplary. Other organizations should emulate this joint effort to organize educational workshops of this nature. On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I thank you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Ministry is making serious efforts in combating pollution through the enforcement of the various regulations provided for under the Environmental Quality Act 1974. We have managed to tackle general and specific issues through the cooperation of all government agencies at the local state and federal levels. We have also required that any new project before being developed must be assessed

- 11 -

hesitate to take action against organisations failing to comply with the provisions provided for under the Environment Quality Act 1974. As far as the need for efficient communication and education in protecting the environment is concerned, my Ministry not only encourages and supports activities like this workshop but we also have plans to intensify efforts in creating environmental awareness with help from other government and non governmental agencies.

I would also like to appeal for more cooperation from research bodies and scholars on steps that should be taken to combat environmental pollution. The government needs to take both short and long^{term} measures and any input of ideas from research institutions and scholars would help our efforts very much.

- 12 -

I am given to know that this workshop has come up with tangible results of publishing of Newsletter, preparation of Radio-Interview programme and video-cassette recordings. Your efforts are commended.

Before concluding this speech may I say thank you again to Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft, Asia Communication Research and Information Centre, Jabatan Komunikasi, UKM for organising this workshop. To the participants I hope you have been exposed to the multi-faceted issues of the environment. To the foreign participants, I hope you have had a nice stay in Malaysia. With that it is my pleasure to officially close this workshop.