

A S E A N

ONE REGION ONE VISION

ASEAN

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PRIME MINISTER
MALAYSIA

MESSAGE

After 30 years of cooperative endeavours, ASEAN is now more than a household word in the region. It embodies a common vision shared by the leaders and peoples of Southeast Asia - that of stability, security and progress.

While many of us may want to sit back and bask in the achievements of ASEAN over the past three decades, many of us may not be able to afford that luxury. Indeed, for us, the leaders in particular, the challenge to lift the organisation to greater heights is an endless one.

That ASEAN has proven to be effective and durable is not in question. What is in question is where do we go from here for the next 10 to 30 years? Here, I would like to congratulate Bernama for publishing this pictorial book on the occasion of the 30th anniversary celebration of ASEAN.

While the book takes a look at the region as it is today, at what we have or have not changed for the past 30 years, it also dares us to look at the region as one 'nation' of the future. As a news agency, Bernama may have its own opinion on ASEAN. However, its observations should provide some thoughts to ponder, especially on how the grouping will look like for the coming generation.

Once again, I congratulate Bernama for taking this initiative.

A large, bold, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD'. The signature is written in a cursive style with thick, dark strokes.

DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD

Kuala Lumpur
14 November 1997

Preface

When the senior editors of BERNAMA sat down to cast their ideas for this pictorial book, the one thing that struck them was that they have grown up and old with ASEAN. They were rookies, or, had yet to join the profession when the grouping was set up 30 years ago.

What also struck them was that ASEAN had been so deeply embedded in their psyche, that it wasn't too difficult to find a theme for the book.

"ASEAN Under One Roof", "ASEAN Through The Years", "The Fruits of ASEAN" or "ASEAN: 30 Years of Peace and Stability" were some of the ideas bandied about, all with the implicit message that 30 years of cooperative endeavours by the grouping had indeed brought peace and progress to the region.

But such a theme would be rather too retrospective.

What is needed is something to carry the torch lit by the founding fathers of ASEAN, to march on, to scale greater heights or to cross wider seas. The dream of every man or woman of ASEAN is universal—food, shelter, clothing, schools, hospitals, money, roads, cars and above all, security.

The 30 years of ASEAN had made this dream possible for many and the next 30 years would see many more dreams come true, especially for those in the newer member-states of ASEAN—Vietnam, Myanmar and Laos, and possibly Cambodia when she joins the organisation.

It is this dream of the 540 million men, women and children of ASEAN that this book dedicates itself to; the dream or "vision" being concretized by the founding fathers in their Bangkok Declaration on August 8, 1967.

The theme of this book "ASEAN: ONE REGION, ONE VISION" connotes a journey yet to end, a struggle yet to be fulfilled, and a vision yet to be realised.

The book, starting with a historical perspective, is also an attempt to look at ASEAN as a region or even as a "single country". And, like the different members in their different state of development and economic progress, the pictures, from different sources, come in their different shades of quality.

Interview

With DR THANAT KHOMAN

Dr Thanat Khoman is one of only two living signatories of the Bangkok Declaration which established the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967. The other is Singapore Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam. While Rajaratnam declined to be interviewed for this special pictorial book on the 30th anniversary of ASEAN, Dr Thanat spoke to Bernama Chief News Editor Azman Ujang recently at his Bangkok residence. In a revealing interview, he walked down memory lane recalling the period leading to the formation of ASEAN, its past, present and future.

Question: *How did ASEAN come about?*

Answer: Well, as you may know ASEAN is a phoenix which rose from the conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia, and Malaysia and the Philippines. We, in Thailand, were quite concerned. Although we were not involved in the conflict, we felt that if the conflict should have arisen we would be directly affected. So, at that time I was the Foreign Minister and it was our duty in Thailand to do something about it. And since we were not involved, we were neutral and we could perform certain services, not to mediate but at least to offer our good offices to the (conflicting) parties. We did just that. I personally travelled to Kuala Lumpur and to Jakarta and Manila to try to find ways to patch up the conflicts between the parties. It took sometime to try to find ways on how to resolve the problem. It was not easy because of the legacy of colonialism. The Japanese invited the parties to go to Tokyo but the parties decided the more convenient place to seek reconciliation was not Japan. And they came here and they asked for facilities to talk. I got out of the discussion because I thought it was the duty of the parties concerned to resolve the problem. I told them that if they wanted my good offices they could find it here, at the Foreign Office. After a series of discussions for a couple of days, they reached an agreement to end the conflict. To celebrate the happy occasion, they decided to sign the agreement here in Bangkok to which I was invited as a friendly party and I accepted. At the banquet that night, I sat next to (Foreign Minister) Adam Malik of Indonesia. I told him that somehow or other, we wanted Indonesia to join the organisation that we would like to form after ASA (Association of Southeast Asia).

ASA collapsed as a result of the "Konfrontasi", dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia. The Philippines and Malaysia were also having "Konfrontasi" over the claim on Sabah. I told Adam Malik we would like to invite Indonesia to join ASA. He said he agreed in principle that Indonesia would join but he asked for time because, as you may know, he was the only civilian in the military Cabinet and he had to go back to Jakarta and try to convince his government. Of course, we gave him all the time that he needed. And after a few months, he sent words that he wanted to have discussions. At that same time, Rajaratnam who was the Foreign Minister of Singapore, came to see me and in principle I agreed to his request for Singapore to join the new organisation. At the inaugural meeting in Bangkok in (August) 1967, we met in the morning and afternoon, we played a lot of golf. And golf had helped a great deal in diplomacy. In the evening of course, we forgot about our work. After a couple of days, we agreed to form the new organisation. We used, of course, ASA as the basis to prepare the papers. The meeting was

quite friendly, cordial and in a comparatively short time we reached an agreement. When the question of finding a name came, we could not, of course, use ASA, and Adam Malik mentioned ASEAN. Adam Malik, as you know, the Indonesians are very good at coining acronyms. So, we found that ASEAN was quite acceptable and we adopted the name. ASEAN was the outcome of the good relations between the countries concerned and a way out of the conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia (Konfrontasi) on one hand, and Philippines and Malaysia over Sabah on the other hand. The principles of the agreement were based on the fact that it was an organisation for regional cooperation on non-military matters. We decided to cooperate on all other matters except military matters. Why?...because we, in Thailand, have had experience with SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organisation) and we found that it did not serve any usefulness to include cooperation on military matters. We were comparatively weak militarily. So we excluded military cooperation but we decided to cooperate on all other matters.

As a matter of fact, even though we decided to concentrate our efforts on the arts, economic and social matters we were forced to deviate from the cooperation first adopted. The occupation by Vietnam of Cambodia forced us to deal with security problems. (In this) we did not use any military approach. We decided to deal with the problem purely and exclusively through political approaches, rather than militarily. We used, especially the United Nations, to try to resolve the problem. Fortunately, we succeeded. We were supported by the world community in our efforts to end the military occupation of Cambodia by the Vietnamese, who later withdrew their forces. That was due to ASEAN's efforts. The world at large, especially the Super-Powers, saw the usefulness of ASEAN when we resolved a military problem without the intervention of outside powers, such as China or the Soviet Union and so on. The outside powers from Europe and America need not have to intervene at all. Of course, they (the Super-Powers) helped us by supporting our efforts at the United Nations and elsewhere, not militarily but politically. This is the clue of the success of ASEAN. Outside powers, especially, the big powers, are important to ensure peace and stability in Southeast Asia. And I think they were grateful for that. That's why after the success of the Cambodian problem, they came to join ASEAN not as members, but as dialogue partners. Soon all the large powers outside ASEAN, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China...they all came to have meetings with ASEAN members as dialogue partners.

ASEAN was the sequel of ASA. The seed of regional cooperation started between Malaysia and Thailand, especially by (Malaysian first Prime Minister) Tunku Abdul Rahman. We, in Thailand, felt that we had to look after our own affairs in order to prevent interference and intervention from outside. That's why we created ASA as the first regional organisation. And in my case, I injected my contribution because I studied in Europe. So, I saw the success of the so-called Common Market before it became the European Union (EU). The example of the European Common Market was the inspiration for the creation of ASEAN and for this, we have to give them credit because in those days, the Common Market was the only organisation of regional cooperation. NAFTA (North America Free Trade Area) did not exist and ASEAN did not exist. We tried to build a budding organisation in

the form of ASA but it collapsed, it did not last, so ASEAN was the second regional cooperation organisation after the Common Market (CM).

Q: Once the preliminary work to establish ASEAN was completed, how many years passed before the Bangkok Declaration which formally established the organisation was finally signed?

A: It took only two months. After the Bangkok Declaration came into being in August 1967, it became the starting point of ASEAN.

Q: Did the fact that all the five founding members and later Brunei were and are non-Communist in character make the grouping anti-Communist?

A: We did not feel that we should stress the anti-Communist objective because it was clear that we were non-Communist countries and we did not want to antagonise the Communist Soviet Union and China. And besides that, we were small countries and non-military and it would be useless to stress on anti-Communism. Besides that, we have seen how SEATO had failed.

Q: What about the so-called "domino theory" which was bandied about then, following the Vietnam War?

A: The countries to the south of Southeast Asia, meaning Malaysia and Indonesia, had realised that while Thailand was in the front line, we might not be able to hold the defence line and if we could not hold the defence line, the danger would go down south and reach Malaysia and Indonesia. And besides that, it was shown during the Pacific War that both Malaysia and Indonesia were affected by the war. So, we did not have to do much to convince both Malaysia and Indonesia of the danger. So, I feel the fears of the domino theory were justified. (However) while we correctly set our objectives as economic and social cooperation, we did not do much in the first 20 years of (ASEAN's) existence. We had to deal with the security problem (posed) by the military occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam. But our principal objective, when ASEAN was created, was obviously economic, social, cultural, educational cooperation, not political matters and certainly, not military matters. But we could not do that (to pursue the original objectives) because of the Cambodian situation. Only after the end of the Cambodian problem could we start to concentrate on the initial objectives, meaning the economic and non-military cooperation.

Q: What were some of the major problems or difficulties that ASEAN had to face or contend with, in the initial years?

A: The permanent officials (civil servants) of the member countries tried to defend very aggressively their own turf. They did not want to complete anything because they were afraid to take the blame of not defending their national interest

Q: What were or are the major weaknesses of ASEAN?

A: The plague of ASEAN during the initial years was that we had too many meetings of little importance. We wasted too much time on having this and that talk. The leaders did not exhort the permanent officials to try to look higher and further than just their immediate perspective. Still, the meetings were too numerous, in my opinion. The meetings that would be successful must be of a higher level. If meetings were conducted among the senior officials of the member countries, I think we could achieve more, rather than leave it to the less senior officials.

Q: In what areas do you think ASEAN as a grouping has failed to achieve?

A: As I said, for the first two decades, we did not do much in terms of economic cooperation or non-military cooperation. It was only after the end of the Cambodia situation that we could start pursuing vigorously our initial objectives. Now, it's more important to look ahead. We learn our lessons from the past, so we should look ahead to the coming decades. In my opinion, the geographical composition of ASEAN is going to be complete soon. It's time to think of the next requirement. In my opinion, the next requirement will be that of consolidation. We have to consolidate the organisation, strengthen it and try to do with cost-effective means and not to waste our time and money on non-productive and counter-productive bureaucracies. (We need) less bureaucracies, less wasteful meetings. Of course, the expanded membership of ASEAN will entail a number of difficulties. It's going to be much more difficult than before to reach a consensus or an agreement. We have to do everything possible to reach the basis or grounds for consensus or agreement.

Q: What difference do you think has ASEAN brought to this region, in other words, what would have become of this region without ASEAN?

A: I have to use the cliché that, if ASEAN did not exist, we must invent it. Perhaps it's a cliché that applies very well to Southeast Asia. We cannot forget that Southeast Asia is something like the Balkans. Southeast Asia was very much Balkanised. Why?... because in Southeast Asia most of the countries emerged from colonial domination by the British, Dutch, Spanish and Americans.

Q: You said earlier that for more than 20 years, ASEAN had been slow in forging economic ties within member countries. Was this in your view intentional or unavoidable?

A: Under the strength of the outside powers, mind you, this system of domination is back again. We have to be very careful from now (because) the Western countries, which lost their colonies after the United Nations decolonisation system are trying to bring back a new system of "colonialism". It would be different from the old one; they would not appoint a governor-general, they would not use military force to occupy a country but they will try to impose their control on the means of production, the economic, cultural

and social activities. That is why (Madeleine) Albright (US Secretary of State), when she took office, said that the Americans should not be shy in wearing the mantle of leadership. This is the key word, "leadership". Leadership here means that they will be the leader. They will have the feudal system seated at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington D.C. The Congress would legislate for the whole world and not merely for the United States. And they are trying to forge an organisation called WASP—White Anglo-Saxon President. The new system may not be exactly similar to the old colonial system but the meaning and the implication will be feudalistic and hegemonistic. We have to be careful with all these globalisation, World Wide Web, Internet, Information Technology...all these are the complements and tenets of the new feudal system, new world hegemony system coming to us if we are not careful enough to protect and defend ourselves. ASEAN has to be aware of the dangers in the coming years.

Another thing is that APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) is also a counterweight to ASEAN. In APEC, the powerful nations like the United States and Japan are trying to wrest control of the region from the members of the regional grouping of nations. Now Japan has signed an agreement of alliance with the United States. So, Japan will become a crony of the United States. This is what the French call "ecueils". It means "hidden rock under the sea" (hidden agenda). They want to force us to compete with the better organised countries with the chance that we will be completely submerged and may be destroyed by the competition.

Q: Dr Thanat, what are some of the many fond or unforgettable memories that you have during your time, especially as Foreign Minister of Thailand?

A: The meetings with friends, especially my golf buddies. With the Tunku, with (Malaysia's second Prime Minister) Tun Razak Hussein, and (former Malaysian Foreign Minister) Ghazali Shafie. Ghazali was the man who played a big part in ending the dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia. He's a good guy; he had not only defended the interest of Malaysia but also helped find the way to effect reconciliation between Malaysia and Indonesia. ASEAN continues to be very important to the members. Of course, now we have to look beyond the Southeast Asian horizon. We have to look to the East or Western Pacific Rim, meaning the United States, Canada, Latin American countries and Europe. We cannot remain stagnant in Southeast Asia. We have to consider the United States and Canada and Latin America as neighbours because the world has become much smaller with the communication advances and media and so on. But unfortunately the United States is not playing a productive role. The United States would gain more by being less domineering: by being a good partner and not a dominator. The United States could be persuaded to play a partnership role rather than the role of a dominator. The United States would gain not only the affections but also the cooperation from the less important (powerful) countries of the world, especially in Southeast Asia.

Q: The non-communist character of ASEAN, whether intended or not, has come a full circle with Vietnam becoming a member. And ASEAN will eventually have 10 members. Did it cross your mind or the minds of leaders at that time that ultimately ASEAN would be 10?

A: In those days, we had to concentrate on those who shared the same ideas first, among the original five founding members. Once we have completed the task of geographical composition, the task is one of consolidation, to try to build a strong framework and structure of ASEAN, rather than the loose relationship as before.

Now, we cannot afford any longer the loose structure, it would have to be strengthened but we must not lose our sovereign right. We are not ready to abandon our sovereign rights. None of us is ready to do that. But there is a way to reach understanding and agreement without sacrificing the sovereign rights, the sovereign decisions. I have a rather optimistic view of the picture. ASEAN is not going to go down because ASEAN is still very useful to each and every member. If we were to relinquish or to leave ASEAN, our potentials will be much lessened, even for the larger members of ASEAN. That is why new members are joining ASEAN, they seem to realise that they will gain more in potential, prestige and importance in ASEAN rather than out of ASEAN. But let me say that ASEAN would continue. We should not be complacent, we have to work hard to continue to strengthen the structure.

Q: English is a very important tool in the development of ASEAN. Can you comment on this?

A: There is no replacement for English. We cannot substitute English with any other language in ASEAN. It's the lingua franca, we cannot use Chinese, we cannot use Malay, we cannot use Thai, we cannot use Spanish. We don't have any choice. I studied French, you know, I did not study English but I have to recognise that there is no replacement for English.

Q: Since your retirement, how have you kept yourself busy?

A: I still have a lot of work to do. I still have a foothold in the Foreign Office, being the Chairman of the Policy Council and I work with the Foreign Office in the Centre for International Studies. I'm also in business, chairman of companies, also the Chairman of the Board of John F. Kennedy Foundation....it sounds like an American foundation but it is not, it is completely Thai. I created it with my own money.

Q: There are worries now in ASEAN countries about the declining family values and that we need to strengthen such values?

A: (This is) because we are brainwashed by the materialistic and social systems of the West. If you look at the system in the West, the family fabric is very loose and very weak, and we have been influenced by that system. Our young people think it is wise to adopt this Western system. I'm very sorry about that. In many ways, we are losing our traditional values. Take the case

of the fastfood, McDonald's...it's horrible. It's very sad. I used to like it at one time when I was in the United States. The fish burger, when they came here in the beginning, was thick enough but as time went on, it became thinner and thinner. They try to take advantage of our young people who think that it's smart to sit at McDonald's. This is the same everywhere, it's the same in France which I go to quite often and even in China. I don't know about Malaysia. Our food is much better, the rice curry is much better than burgers.

Q: The West talks a lot about human rights. Do you think that human rights are human rights no matter in what country you refer to?

A: They will never forgive me when I say the worst violators of human rights are the colonial powers. Why? Because they deprive people of their fundamental basic rights, the right to be free. They accused the Chinese of violating human rights when actually the Chinese suffered a lot from the incursions and aggression of the Western powers, like the Opium War. Even the Governor of Hong Kong had the audacity to claim that he wanted to leave democratic legacy to Hong Kong. Just imagine, a few years ago the Chinese in Hong Kong could not be members of the Jockey Club there. Who started the Opium War to try and drug the whole country? Can you call it evidence of democracy? The Chinese, like the Japanese, play soft (in their response to violations of human rights) because they want to keep the Americans (on their side). They don't try to be harsh about the issue of human rights. Here, I have nothing to lose, I say openly and loudly that the worst violators of human rights are the colonial powers.

Q: But has the United States done anything good in this region?

A: America has done many good things, that I'm willing to recognise. But most of the things that they did actually served their own national interest as much as the interests of the others. And the Americans have the tendency to portray themselves as moralists, as an example of morality and human rights. In fact, the way they treat the Blacks in the United States, can anybody consider that as an observance of human rights. Even now, with the Ku Klux Klan and skinheads, some of our people, our Thai priests in Arizona were massacred by the skinheads. In all, 14 people were massacred and they found an ethnic Thai in order to avoid the accusation of racism. In fact, most Thais in the United States knew that one man could not have killed 14 people, but the skinheads. You can look at the American judicial system, how it works...

Q: Looking back, how would you describe your own role in ASEAN and the development of the region?

A: I'm very glad and very happy to have played a part in creating something that has lasted until today, in spite of the unfavourable appraisal at the time when ASEAN came into being. They accused us of being the front organisation of American imperialism. History by itself is not so important, it is important only to tell the people that these were the steps taken and some of the steps were wrong, so that they should correct them and not repeat the mistakes.

Interview

With PRIME MINISTER DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD of Malaysia

In conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad granted a special interview to Bernama acting Editor-in-Chief, Syed Jamil Jaafar and Executive Editor, Zainoor Sulaiman.

The Prime Minister was asked about the successes and failures of the regional grouping as well as the outlook for the future.

Question: *What are your perceptions of ASEAN, its successes and failures over the past 30 years and your hopes and vision for the next 30 years?*

Prime Minister: Firstly, I must admit that when ASEAN was first formed, I was not too hopeful that it would succeed. There were too many differences between the parties to the agreement ... major differences. It would not be possible for them to cooperate but I must say I was wrong. Despite the early difficulties, ASEAN leaders have managed to pull it through and also to make a success of it, not just in terms of economic cooperation which was not the principal objective of ASEAN. The principal objective of ASEAN was how to resolve problems between neighbours. There were tension and differences of opinion but ASEAN provided a forum to resolve them. Not fully, but at least to reduce the tension.

The countries learnt the right approach from one another. Initially, possibly due to independence and nationalism, certain countries seemed to reject foreign participation in their economy. But it became evident that foreign investment could contribute towards the development of a country and as a result, all the ASEAN countries opened up their economy to foreign investors resulting economic growth and subsequent prosperity. The transfer of technology has also enabled ASEAN countries to participate in industrialisation.

So I would say that over the 30 years, the initial gloom has been overcome and ASEAN has emerged as one of the most cohesive groupings in the world.

Q: *As host of the 30th anniversary of ASEAN, are you disappointed that the realisation of ASEAN 10 has been delayed?*

PM: Well, I am disappointed. I didn't foresee this. I thought that Myanmar would be a problem but as it turned out it was not Myanmar but some internal problems of Cambodia that had resulted in it not becoming a member. But I still hope that certain changes would be made so that it could become part of ASEAN.

Q: *Do you think this will be soon?*

PM: We don't know ... but it is possible.

Q: There are allegations that ASEAN seemed powerless in the face of the Cambodian problem.

PM: No, we have never, never thought that ASEAN would be able to interfere in the internal affairs of any country. We have never done that, even when members of ASEAN encountered internal problems. We did not interfere but they resolved these problems themselves.

Q: With the admission of Myanmar into ASEAN despite opposition from the United States and Europe, do you foresee fierce pressure being applied on ASEAN to speed up changes in Myanmar?

PM: Well, there has always been pressure on us with regard to Myanmar but we believe that the best way to help matters would be to have contact with people, to demonstrate that there is nothing to fear from a more liberal attitude towards the people. Over time I think there will be improvements but we cannot push too hard. We can't achieve everything overnight.

Q: It has been said that ASEAN's constructive engagement policy (towards Myanmar) has not been very effective.

PM: On the contrary it has been very effective. You may remember that under the previous government before the SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council), that government was reclusive, it refused to have anything to do with anybody at all. They were isolationist but after that... of course partly from internal pressure and partly from contact with ASEAN... they have seen that the way the ASEAN countries have developed holds out hope for Myanmar also to develop. So they have changed a lot. They have now contacts with everybody. They are willing to be a member of a community where before they were isolationist. They are willing to accept foreign direct investment, foreign participation in their economy. They are much more developed and I can't see how anybody can say that this direct engagement has not produced results. It has produced tremendous results.

Q: Inevitably when Southeast Asia is discussed, the spectre of a flash point in the Spratlys is raised. Do you foresee the possibility of a real conflict among the claimants to the atolls, especially China?

PM: There will be differences. There will be some strain and tension perhaps but conflict, open conflict, is something that I don't foresee. We can negotiate with China to resolve the whole problem.

Q: What are your fears for the region in the future?

PM: We are moving into the so-called Information Age and a borderless world. We have to open up our economy (but) our own companies and

corporations are not yet strong enough to compete with those coming from outside. There is a real danger of our economy being totally dominated by foreign companies with huge sums of money and greater technology. For example, they can easily swallow up our telecommunications industry, leaving nothing for us. They can completely control our media, because their media is powerful. They have the money ... they can buy out everybody (by) making an offer that cannot be refused. So in the end, the rich from outside can dominate the poor in countries like ASEAN. Already we are seeing it in the way United States financier, George Soros had tried to undermine ASEAN (by destabilising their currencies). We have worked for 30 years to build up a good economy. Our people are enjoying a fairly good life but in just a few days, the incomes of even the poorest people have now been reduced. They are made poorer by the same amount of loss that we have sustained ... billions of dollars have been lost within a few days, when you know that it took us years to build up. So this is what I fear.

Q: What can we do?

PM: I think there must be some definition about what constitutes international crime. For example, action can be taken against people who grow poppy in their own country and take the case of the President of Panama who was arrested and taken back to the United States for trial under U.S. laws. There must be some international understanding that international crime such as economic sabotage should be subject to international laws. We should be able to take action against those who violate these laws.

Q: Will Malaysia be taking any initiative in this direction?

PM: Well, we will talk about it. I know people are worried and afraid because these are very powerful forces, backed by very powerful countries and anything we try to do of course, will be stopped by them because it's not in their interest.

Q: How do you see the role of the United Nations? There has been a proposal that a regional grouping like ASEAN be given a permanent seat in the Security Council?

PM: Yes, that would be a good idea if a grouping like ASEAN is given a permanent seat in the Security Council but it should also be given the veto, so that we too can stop others from doing what we feel is harmful to us. Alternatively, we feel that nobody should have any veto. Or if we must have the veto, the veto cannot be exercised by just one group.

Q: Would United States agree?

PM: Of course they will not agree. Big, powerful countries never agree to surrendering even a little bit of their power.

Q: What will be ASEAN's greatest challenge in the so-called borderless world?

PM: Well, although it is borderless we have to remember that the crossing must not be in one direction. People should not take advantage of our not having any borders to take what belongs to us, when we are not in a position to take what belongs to others. So ASEAN must be fully aware. The only way that ASEAN can react is to act together.

Q: Malaysia is pushing vigorously its Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project while Singapore has its own Information Technology programme and so too has the Philippines. Do you foresee a convergence among the ASEAN countries in this area of multimedia?

PM: Yes, I think there will be. In fact the MSC has already provided for cooperation with other similar projects elsewhere. We know that we are not going to have a monopoly. So if there are other projects elsewhere, we are willing to work together. In fact we are willing to work even with European countries. Like Hungary for example, we have signed an agreement to work with them.

Q: Do you foresee a multimedia convergence in ASEAN that other regions might emulate?

PM: It's possible. Of course, ASEAN is much more cohesive than most other groupings.

Q: When the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum was first mooted, there was a lot of apprehension that it would overtake ASEAN. Is this true today?

PM: Yes, to a certain extent, Apec has overshadowed ASEAN. There is no doubt about that. Of course, we entered Apec not as a grouping but as individual countries. But there is no way that we can avoid Apec because this is formed by powerful countries. And if you don't join, you'll be isolated.



A S E A N

ONE REGION ONE VISION

CHAPTER

1

THE LAST 30 YEARS
OF ASEAN

“**W**e should not be listening to outside advice about our security needs. In any case, I believe it is counter-productive to discuss regional security based on a conscious or subconscious attitude of wanting to contain or restrain potential enemies. It would lead us into believing in the need for counter-threats to meet the perceived threats. That would be the surest way of turning the enemies we dream up into real ones.”

*Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok
December 14, 1995*

The Asean Declaration

(Bangkok Declaration)

BANGKOK, 8 AUGUST 1967

The Presidium Minister for Political Affairs/Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand:

MINDFUL of the existence of mutual interests and common problems among countries of South-East Asia and convinced of the need to strengthen further the existing bonds of regional solidarity and cooperation;

DESIRING to establish a firm foundation for common action to promote regional cooperation in South-East Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the region;

CONSCIOUS that in an increasingly interdependent world, the cherished ideals of peace, freedom, social justice and economic well-being are best attained by fostering good understanding, good neighbourliness and meaningful cooperation among the countries of the region already bound together by ties of history and culture;

CONSIDERING that the countries of South-East Asia share a primary responsibility for strengthening the economic and social stability of the region and ensuring their peaceful and progressive national development, and that they are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their peoples;

AFFIRMING that all foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries concerned and are not intended to be used directly or indirectly to subvert the national independence and freedom of States in the area or prejudice the orderly processes of their national development;

DO HEREBY DECLARE:

FIRST, the establishment of an Association for Regional Cooperation among the countries of South-East Asia to be known as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

SECOND, that the aims and purposes of the Association shall be:

- 1** To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of South-East Asian Nations;
- 2** To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- 3** To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
- 4** To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;

5 To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;

6 To promote South-East Asian studies;

7 To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

THIRD, that to carry out these aims and purposes, the following machinery shall be established:

1 Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers, which shall be by rotation and referred to as ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers may be convened as required.

2 A Standing Committee, under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of the host country or his representative and having as its members the accredited Ambassadors of the other member countries, to carry on the work of the Association in between Meetings of Foreign Ministers.

3 Ad-Hoc Committees and Permanent Committees of specialists and officials on specific subjects.

4 A National Secretariat in each member country to carry out the work of the Association on behalf of that country and to service the Annual or Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers, the Standing Committee and such other committees as may hereafter be established.

FOURTH, that the Association is open for participation to all States in the South-East Asian Region subscribing to the aforementioned aims, principles and purposes.

FIFTH, that the Association represents the collective will of the nations of South-East Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity.

DONE in Bangkok on the Eighth Day of August in the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Seven.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA:

ADAM MALIK
Presidium Minister for Political Affairs
Minister for Foreign Affairs

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES:

NARCISO RAMOS
Secretary of Foreign Affairs

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE:

S. RAJARATNAM
Minister of Foreign Affairs

FOR MALAYSIA:

TUN ABDUL RAZAK
Minister of Defence and
Minister of National Development

FOR THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND:

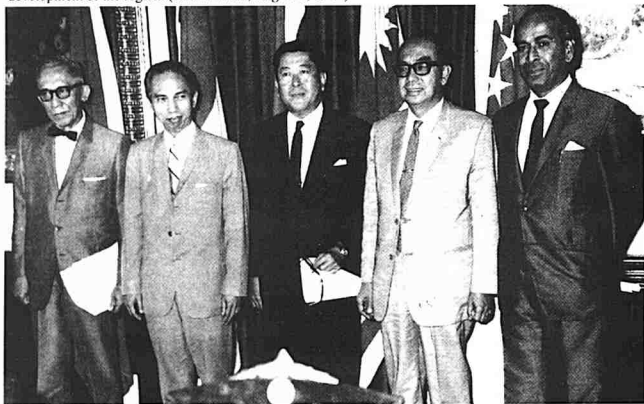
THANAT KHOMAN
Minister of Foreign Affairs



The ASEAN Aims: First 7-Point Accord Signed

Bangkok, Tuesday: Ministers of five Southeast Asian countries today signed a joint seven-point declaration establishing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The declaration and an accompanying joint press statement said the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore would cooperate to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development of the region. (*Straits Times*, August 9, 1967)



LAOS AND MYANMAR JOIN ASEAN TODAY

Kuala Lumpur, July 23 (Bernama): Asean warmly embraced Myanmar and Laos as new members in a simple ceremony here after a last ditch bid by Cambodia to join the regional grouping failed today.

The historic occasion expanded the Asean family to nine, ahead of its 30th anniversary celebrations on August 8, this year.

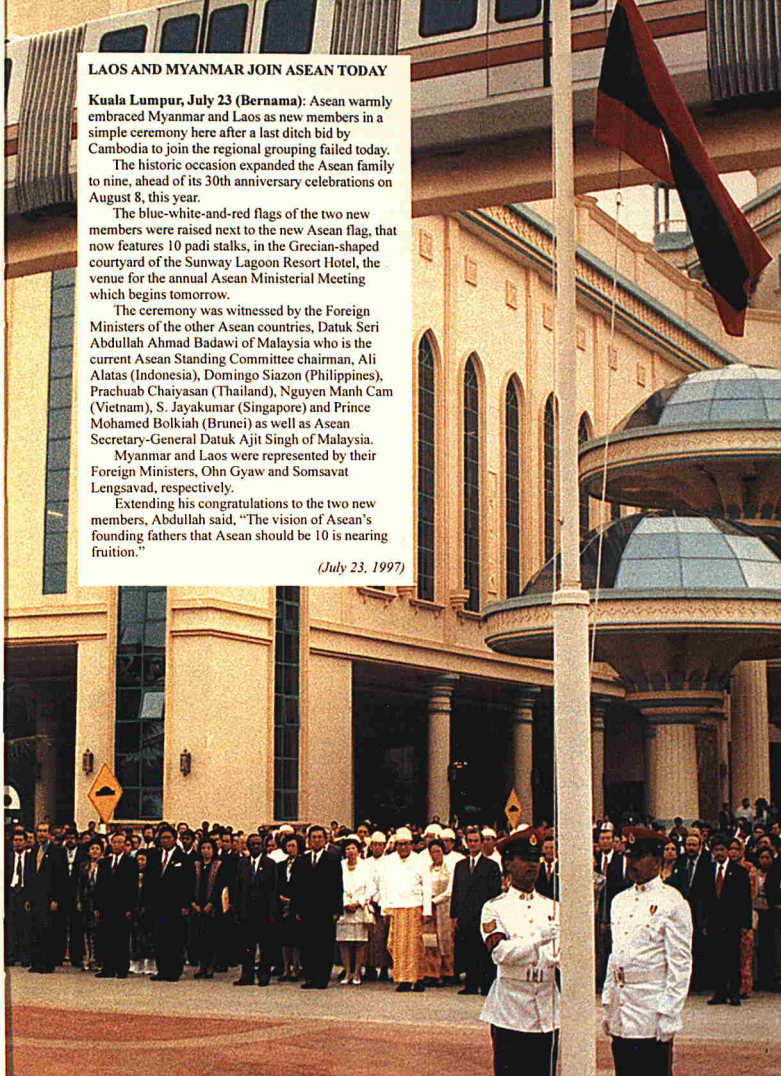
The blue-white-and-red flags of the two new members were raised next to the new Asean flag, that now features 10 padi stalks, in the Grecian-shaped courtyard of the Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel, the venue for the annual Asean Ministerial Meeting which begins tomorrow.

The ceremony was witnessed by the Foreign Ministers of the other Asean countries, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia who is the current Asean Standing Committee chairman, Ali Alatas (Indonesia), Domingo Siazon (Philippines), Prachuab Chaityan (Thailand), Nguyen Manh Cam (Vietnam), S. Jayakumar (Singapore) and Prince Mohamed Bolkiah (Brunei) as well as Asean Secretary-General Datuk Ajit Singh of Malaysia.

Myanmar and Laos were represented by their Foreign Ministers, Ohn Gyaw and Somsavat Lengsavad, respectively.

Extending his congratulations to the two new members, Abdullah said, "The vision of Asean's founding fathers that Asean should be 10 is nearing fruition."

(July 23, 1997)



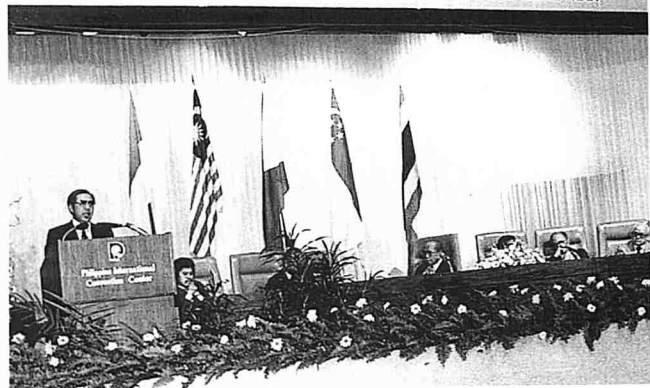




Top left: Foreign Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen having an audience with King Bhumibol during the 11th AMM, Pattaya, June 1978.
Top right: Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen having a word with Foreign Minister Carlos Ramulo during the 11th AMM.
Middle left: ASEAN Foreign Ministers posing with President Soeharto at the 12th AMM, Bali, June 1979.
Middle right: The roundtable meeting of the 12th AMM.
Bottom: The ASEAN-Australia Consultative Meeting in Canberra.



**FOURTEENTH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING
AND
POST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
MANILA, PHILIPPINES 17-20 JUNE 1981**





Facing Page: The 14th AMM and PMC in Manila, June 1981.



Left: General Assembly of ASEAN Law Association, Kuala Lumpur 1982.

Opposite Page Top Left: Foreign Minister Ghazali Shafie receiving a Thai award from Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda.



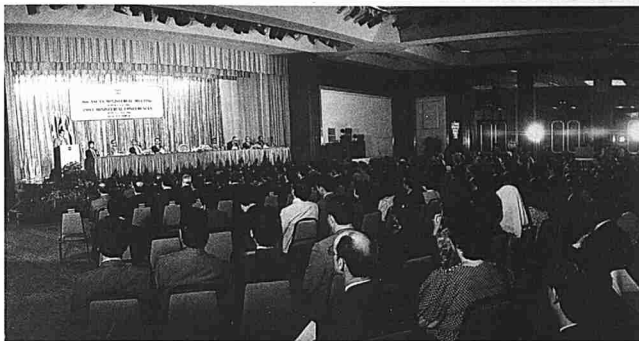




"The Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to the ASEAN Declaration and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord as the basis for ASEAN cooperation. They directed that on the basis of these declarations, ASEAN countries should further intensify their efforts to strengthen and consolidate ASEAN into a strong, viable and cohesive regional organisation.

The Heads of Government reviewed developments affecting the ASEAN region. They agree that the situation as it exists today presents an opportunity for countries in the region to shape their own destiny without the involvement and interference by outside powers."

*Joint Communique of 2nd ASEAN Summit, Kuala Lumpur, August 5, 1977
(10th Anniversary of ASEAN)*







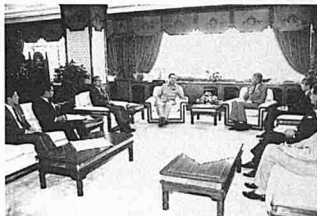
"The Heads of Government agreed that ASEAN has grown into a viable and dynamic organisation, fostering the spirit of regional cooperation and solidarity and strengthening national and regional resilience. They noted that ASEAN has also developed a distinct identity and has become an effective vehicle for joint approaches to regional and international issues. They also noted that regular consultations have forged closer relations among the member states and thus promoted peace, stability and prosperity in the region."

*Joint Communique, 3rd ASEAN Summit, Manila, December 15, 1987.
(20th Anniversary of Asean)*

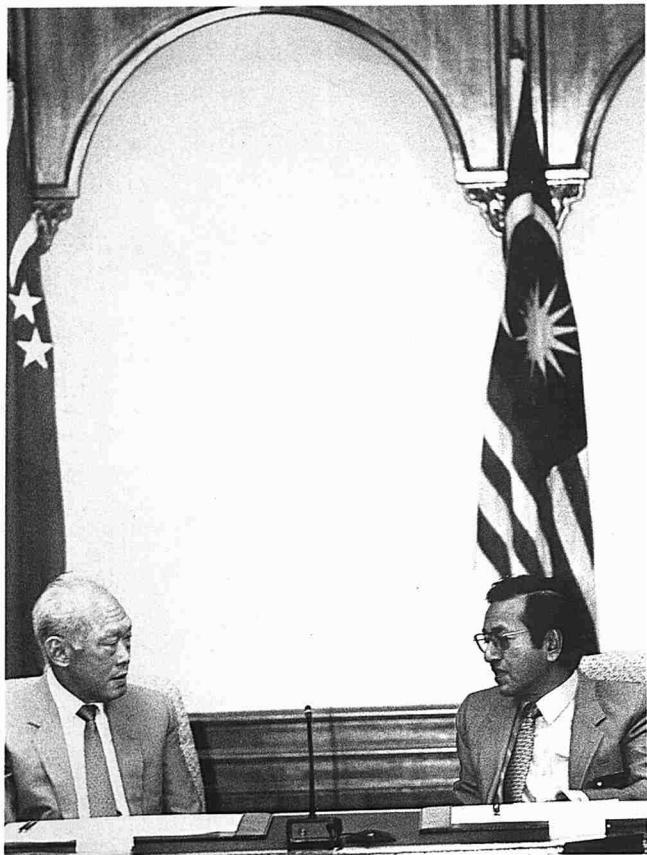


1. Member states shall strengthen national and regional resilience to ensure security, stability and growth in the ASEAN region.
2. ASEAN regionalism founded upon political, economic and cultural cohesion is more vital than ever for the future of Southeast Asia.
3. ASEAN shall pursue regional solidarity and cooperation under all circumstances, especially whenever pressures and tensions of any kind, arising from within the region or from without, challenge the capacities, resourcefulness and goodwill of the ASEAN nations.
4. Intra-regional disputes shall be settled by peaceful means in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the United Nations Charter.
5. While each member state shall be responsible for its own security, cooperation on a non-ASEAN basis among the member states in security matters shall continue in accordance with their mutual needs and interests.
6. Member states shall strengthen intra-ASEAN economic cooperation to maximise the realisation of the region's potential in trade and development and to increase ASEAN's efficacy in combating protectionism and countering its effects.
7. Member states shall encourage an environment in which the private sector can play an increasing role in economic development and in intra-ASEAN cooperation.
8. ASEAN functional cooperation shall promote, increased awareness of ASEAN, wider involvement and increased participation and cooperation by the peoples of ASEAN, and development of human resources.
9. ASEAN shall remain firmly resolved in eradicating the scourge of drug abuse and illicit societies and debilitates its peoples.

ASEAN Manila Declaration, December 15, 1987



Top right and left: Thai-Malaysian cooperation under the spirit of ASEAN led to the surrender of the outlawed Thai and Malaysian Communist Party, Haadyai, December 1989.



ASEAN makes it a tradition for their leaders to meet on a bilateral basis to foster closer ties and understanding, as in this meeting between the then Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew and Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir Mohamad.



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SEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING
AND
MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
19-24 JULY 1991
KUALA LUMPUR









OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE
23RD MEETING OF THE
ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS

BY
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
DATO SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD
THE PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA
7TH OCTOBER 1991, KUALA LUMPUR



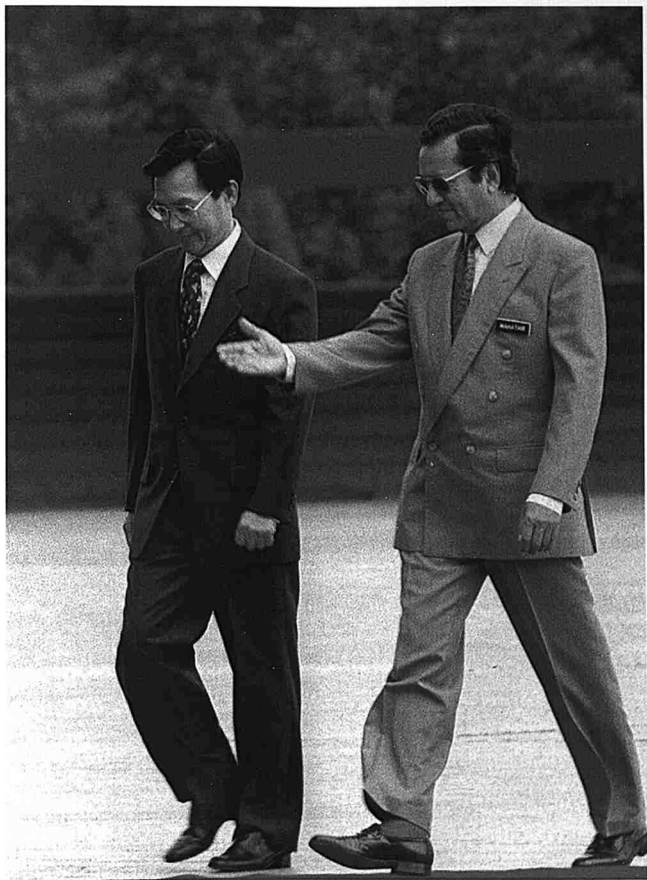




Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore in one of their numerous meetings over the years.







"This way, please..." Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia seemed to say to Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai of Thailand when the latter visited Malaysia on January 6, 1993 for the first time as the Thai head of Government.



RELATIONSHIP WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS

"While ASEAN's dialogues with Australia, Canada, the European Community, Japan, New Zealand and the United States have covered wide areas, member states shall further emphasise market access, trade and tourism promotion, investments, flow of resources, industrial development and support for ASEAN's positions in international fora. ASEAN's dialogues with these countries should be kept under review to meet these objectives."

ASEAN Manila Declaration, December 5, 1987.

ASEAN's dialogue partners now include China, South Korea, Russia, India and Pakistan.







"The political and economic potentials which ASEAN would have, as an enlarged grouping, to determine ASEAN's own destiny, and to influence the pace and direction of Asia Pacific affairs, is really quite enormous. That is why the ASEAN Ten should become a reality quickly, not slowly.

I do believe that, with sufficient determination and convergence of views, we can exert influence to protect and promote our own interests. The decisions taken at the recent APEC Leaders Meeting in Osaka was a good example where Asian countries of the Pacific spoke unitedly, and succeeded in establishing the desired pace for trade and investment liberalisations in our own region.

There was indeed concern that APEC could dilute ASEAN. But APEC was going to proceed anyway, with or without some ASEAN members participating. So, we felt it was better for ASEAN to be inside APEC and be able to influence it than be outside without any influence. ASEAN has indeed influenced APEC's evolution. Indonesia contributed the Bogor Declaration in 1994 and the Philippines, the Manila Action Plan for APEC (MAPA) in 1966.

ASEAN aims to be a free trade area by the year 2003. This is 17 years ahead of the APEC's goal of 2020. ASEAN can be a catalyst for a freer trade regime within the whole of APEC. It has not been and will not be diluted by APEC."

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore in an interview with Bernama.





“ASEAN welcomes accession by all countries in Southeast Asia to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which will provide a common framework for wider regional cooperation embracing the whole of Southeast Asia;

ASEAN will also seek the cognizance of the United Nations for the Treaty through such means as an appropriate Resolution. This will signify ASEAN's commitment to the centrality of the UN's role in the maintenance of international peace and security as well as promoting cooperation for socio-economic development;

ASEAN could use established fora to promote external dialogues on enhancing security in the region as well as intra-ASEAN dialogues on ASEAN security cooperation (such as the regional security seminars held in Manila and Bangkok in 1991, and the workshops on the South China Sea held in Bali in 1990 and Bandung in 1991), taking full cognizance of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord. To enhance this effort, ASEAN should intensify its external dialogues in political and security matters by using the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC);



ASEAN has made major strides in building cooperative ties with states of the Asia Pacific region and shall continue to accord them a high priority;

ASEAN will seek to realise the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) and a Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) in consultation with friendly countries, taking into account changing circumstances;

ASEAN will closely cooperate with the United Nations and the international community in ensuring the full implementation of the Peace Agreements signed in Paris in October 1991.”



ASEAN Singapore Declaration, January 28, 1992.



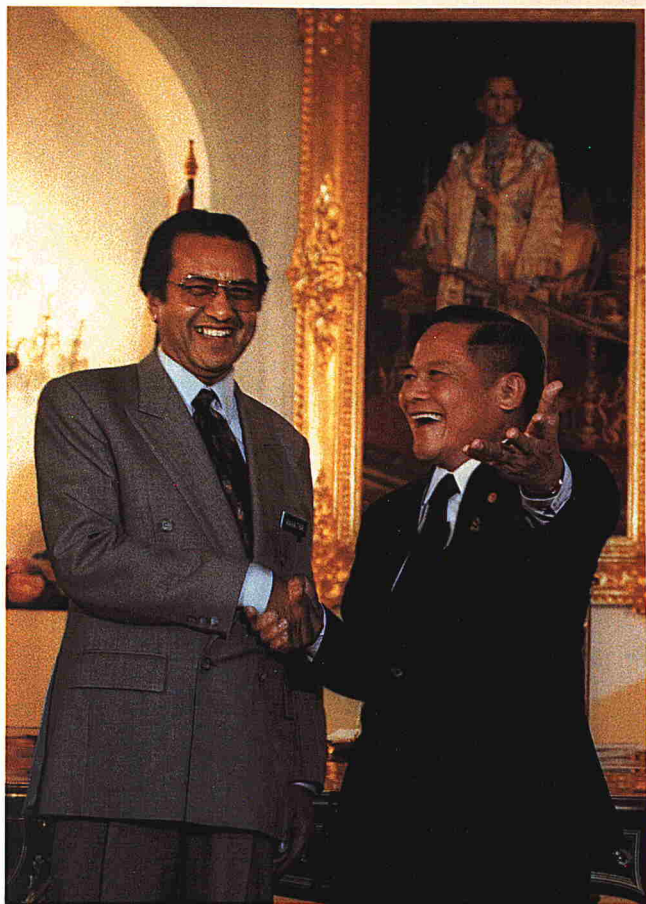
"ASEAN shall move towards a higher plane of political and economic cooperation to secure regional peace and prosperity;

ASEAN shall constantly seek to safeguard its collective interests in response to the formation of large and powerful economic groupings among the developed countries, in particular through the promotion of an open international economic regime and by stimulating economic cooperation in the region;

ASEAN shall seek avenues to engage member states in new areas of cooperation in security matters; and

ASEAN shall forge a closer relationship based on friendship and cooperation with the IndoChinese countries, following the settlement on Cambodia."

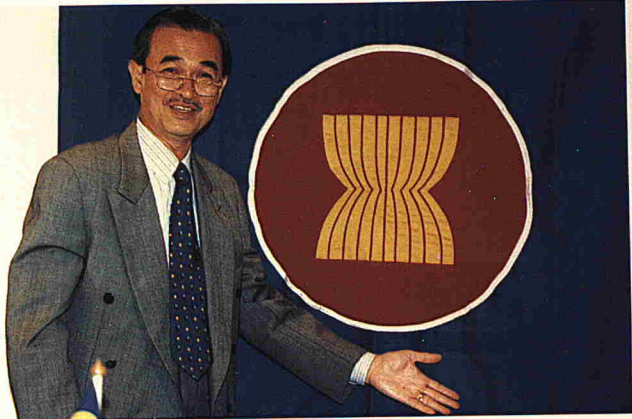
ASEAN Singapore Declaration, January 28, 1992.





Top and bottom:
Group photo with King Bhumibol during the 1st ASEM summit in Bangkok, March 1996.





Malaysian Foreign Minister Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi unveiling the new Asean logo in Kuala Lumpur on May 31, 1997.

It was to represent all the 10 Southeast Asian nations but Cambodia's membership was deferred because of its political crisis.

The new ASEAN logo represents a stable, peaceful, united and dynamic ASEAN.

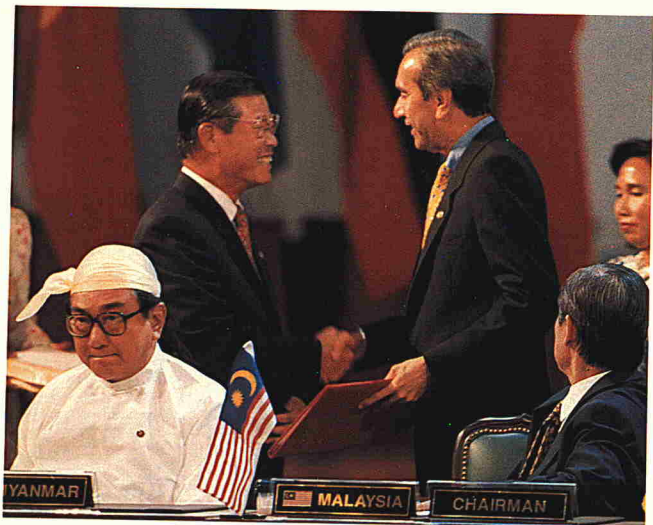
The colours of the logo—blue, red, white and yellow—represent the main colours of the crests of all the ASEAN countries.

The blue represents peace and stability; red depicts courage and dynamism; white shows purity and yellow symbolises prosperity.

The ten stalks of padi represent the dream of ASEAN's Founding Fathers for an ASEAN comprising all the ten countries in Southeast Asia bound together in friendship and solidarity. The circle represents the unity of ASEAN.

"If there is discrimination against Myanmar, it is a discrimination against Asean...".

Left:
Prime Minister Dr Mahathir
Mohamad of Malaysia.





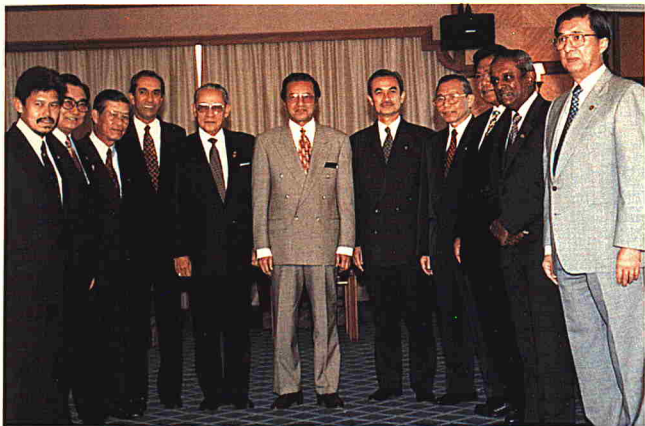
“Apart from fulfilling the dreams of ASEAN’s founding fathers, an expanded ASEAN will make for a cohesive Southeast Asian community. It may take another 30 years, but if ASEAN 9 (and later ASEAN 10 with Cambodia) extrapolates the goals and achievements of ASEAN 7, Southeast Asia will enjoy an unprecedented period of peace, stability and prosperity.

ASEAN takes a long view of its interests. It includes neighbours of different views because it wants to forge common interests and prevent differences from erupting into conflicts. It is better to include and accommodate than exclude and reject disparate interests.”

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore in an interview with Bernama



In ASEAN, all members and dialogue partners stand equally tall, and speak equally loud or soft...





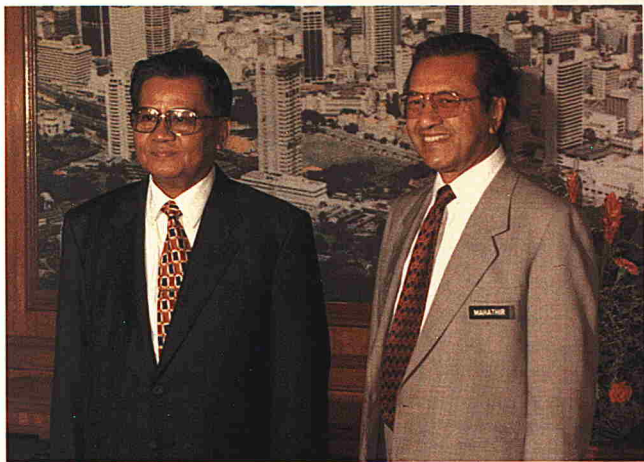
"Consultation" is a key word in ASEAN. All issues, big and small are resolved behind closed doors. If the problems prove too stubborn, they are left for resolution at a later date.



"ASEAN has come a long way since its inception 28 years ago in Bangkok. The accomplishments of ASEAN and its individual members are often held up as models of regional cooperation and economic dynamism. And as a strong ASEAN has helped dispel clouds of insecurity in the region, so shall a community of One Southeast Asia, living in harmony, be a strong safeguard for peace and prosperity in this part of the world."

*Prime Minister Banham Silpa-Archa of Thailand,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*





Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad with Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council and
Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar.

Left

Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad with Prime Minister Khamtay Siphandone
of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

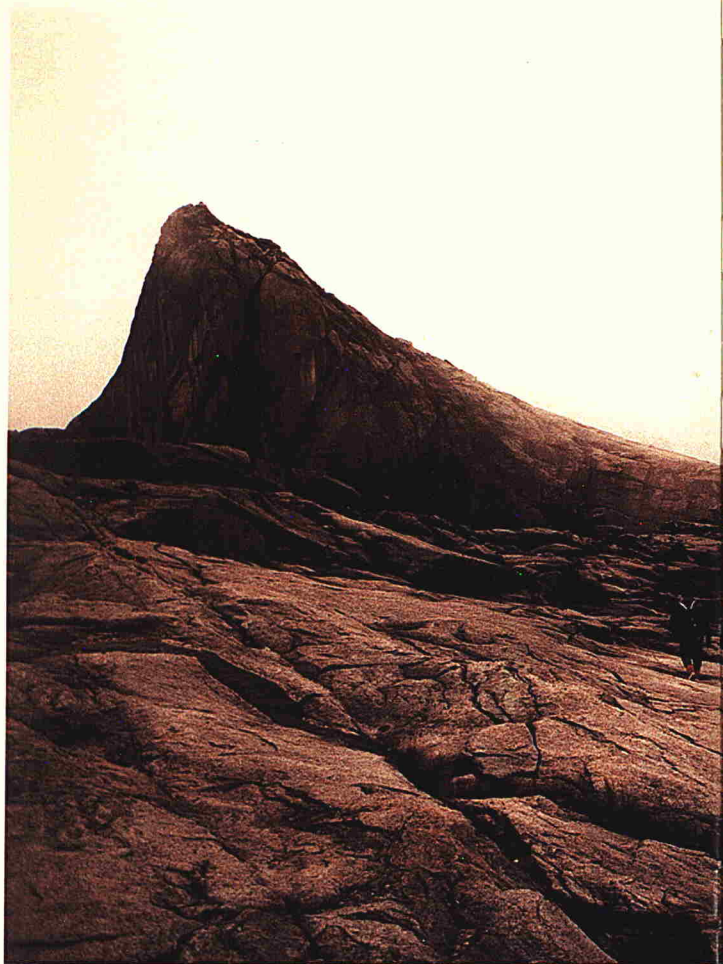
A S E A N

ONE REGION ONE VISION

CHAPTER

2

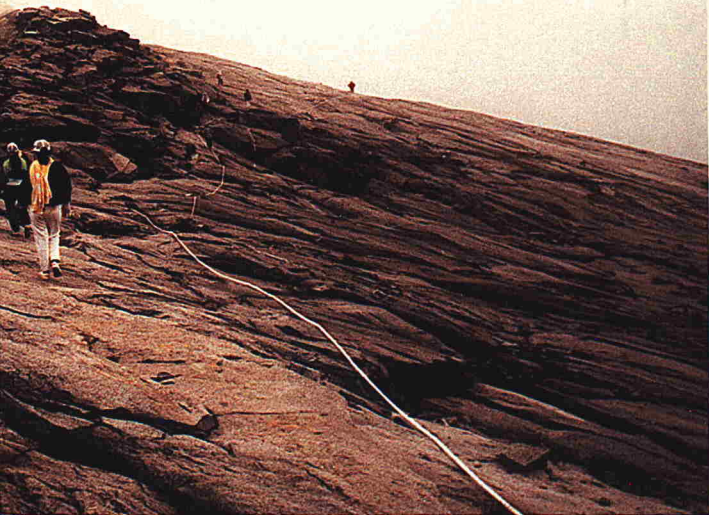
THE LANDSCAPE
OF ASEAN



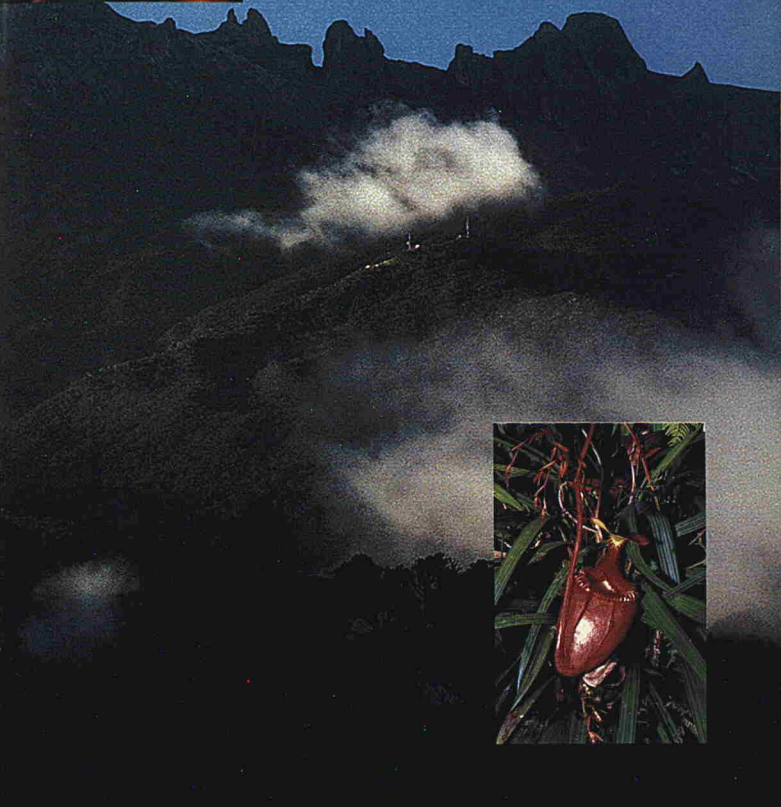
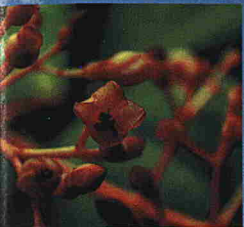
Like Mount Kinabalu, the highest mountain
in Southeast Asia, the aspirations and goals
of ASEAN are as lofty but reachable.

"By the time we leave this great city, we will have
marked ASEAN's attainment of a level of cooperation
from where we can launch our final ascent to the
heights of mutuality, integration and community."

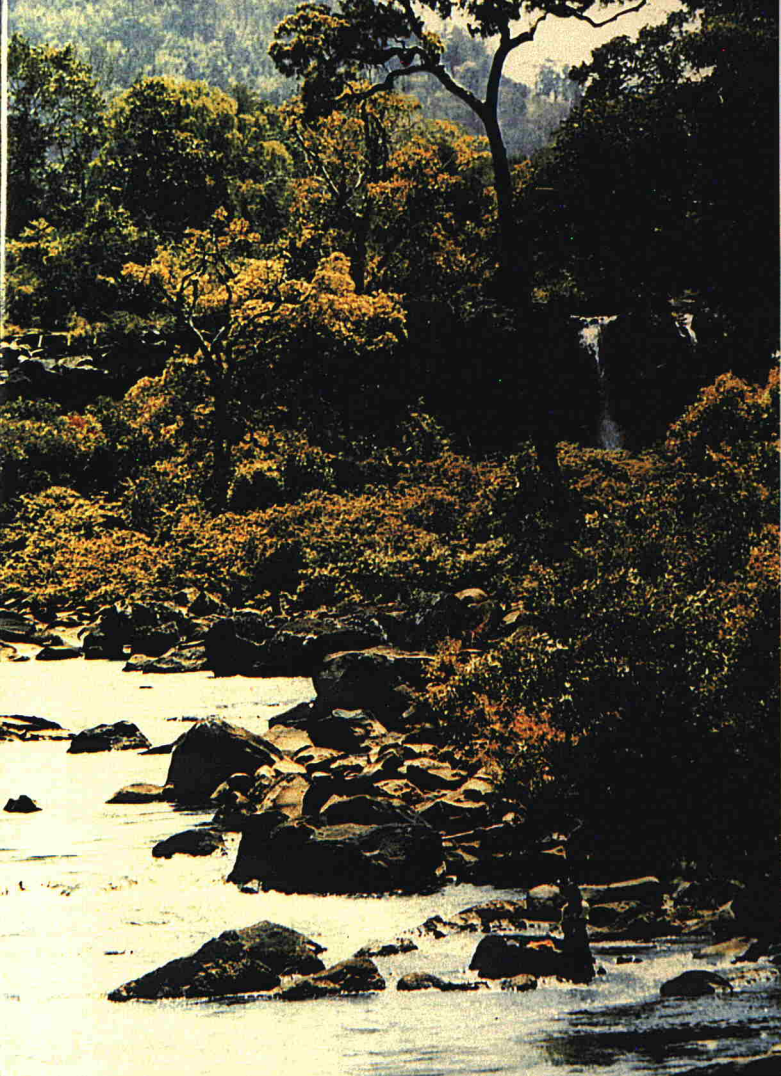
*President Fidel V. Ramos of the Philippines,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*









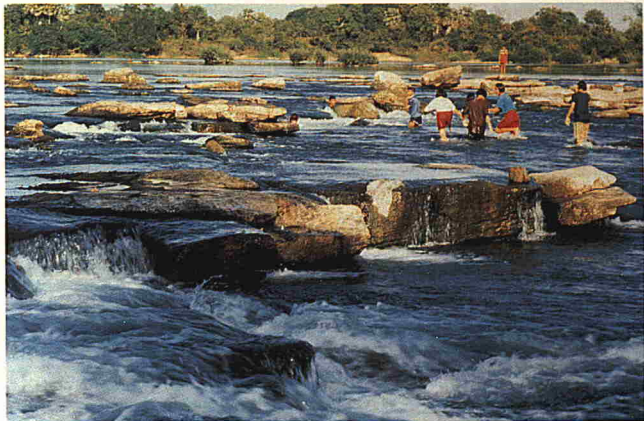


The lush greeneries and mountains are very much a part of Southeast Asia. They are the life and soul of this beautiful region.

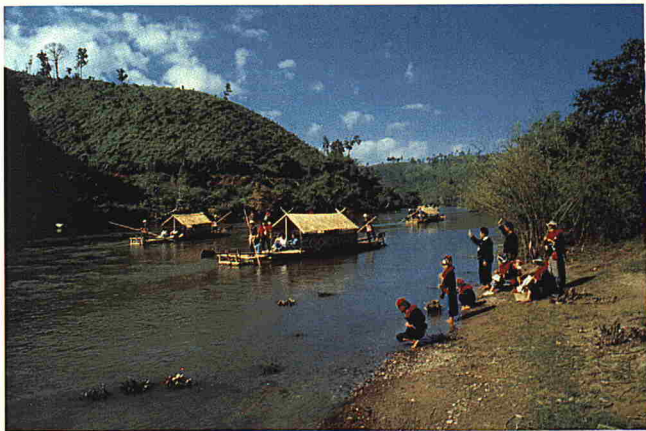
For hundred of years, the people have toiled the land or fish in its waters for a meagre livelihood.

That way of life is slowly but surely changing for the better, under the national programmes of the individual member countries, all firmly anchored by the peace and stability provided by ASEAN.





The diversity of ASEAN's landscape, people, culture and religion has led many to describe the region as the blessed land.





"Thus strengthened, we can carry into the 21st century ASEAN's agenda for cooperation in social and economic development as well as for a modus vivendi for regional peace and stability. We will then be in an excellent position to cope with the challenges posed by the current era of globalisation and interdependence and to avail ourselves of the opportunities that may be offered."

*President Soeharto of Indonesia,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*



"Looking back, I am glad we undertook several bold and new measures for economic and political cooperation. ASEAN has made progress over the last three years. We have a strong foundation upon which to build regional cooperation."

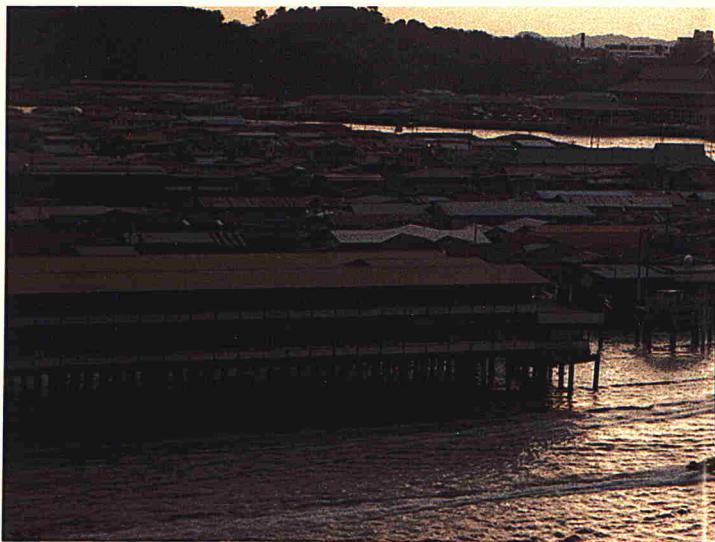
*Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*



"Over its 28 years, ASEAN has acquired significant influence in the world. ASEAN has attained this stature by consistently acting with solidarity and cohesion—within itself and on the world stage. It has manifested its capacity through an expanding web of relationship over a broad range of human endeavours, both among governments and private groups and individuals, in an immense variety of fields.

We must now deepen ASEAN's identity by sharpening and broadening its own people's consciousness of ASEAN, its member-countries, and its plural cultures."

*President Fidel V. Ramos of the Philippines,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*

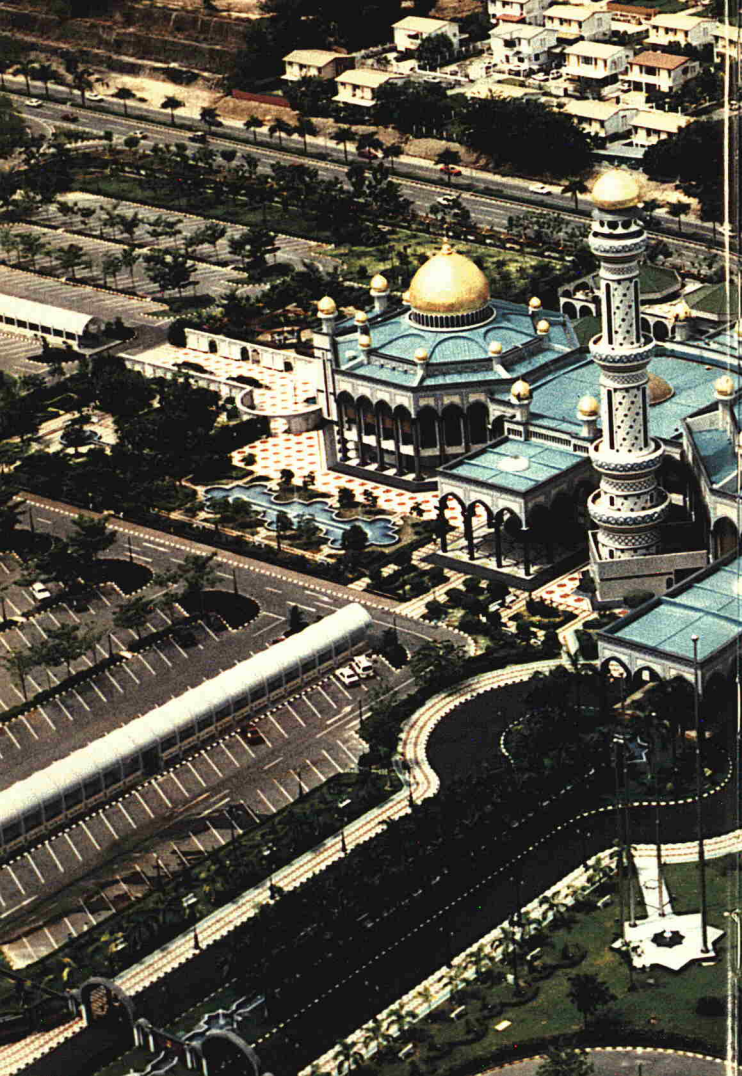




"It is true that never before has ASEAN faced such a promising opportunity as at present. At the same time, one should look at the diversity in terms of history, culture and unequal levels of economic development, which presents itself as no small challenge to ASEAN on its path of development. The commitment of the Association and the talents of ASEAN leaders in realising the shared objectives will be important factors determining the Association's future."

*Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet of Vietnam,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*









"As we look ahead, I see many parts of ASEAN enjoying Europe's present standard of living in 20 to 30 years time. Certainly, some of us should then be classified as high-income countries and others middle-income countries. I hope none of us will be in the low-income category.

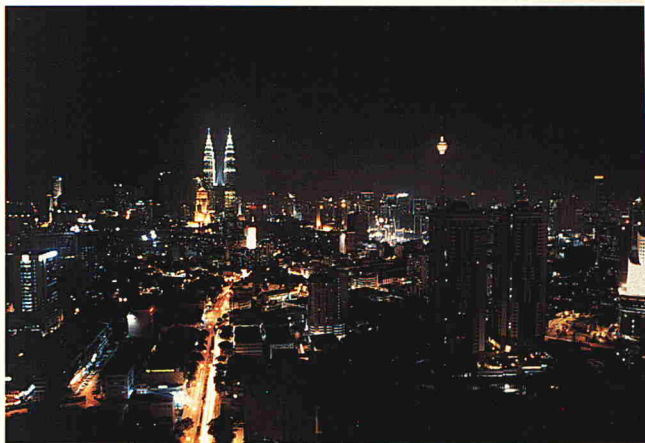
By 2025, ASEAN will have expanded to include all countries in Southeast Asia. But we must never become a closed, inward-looking regional bloc. We must practise outward regionalism, i.e. have an outward-looking attitude.

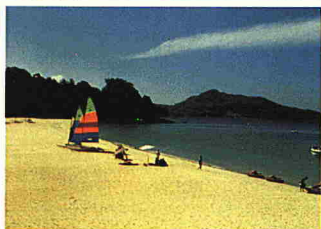
We have already demonstrated this in Bangkok by inviting other leaders of Southeast Asia to join us here for an informal tête-à-tête among the leaders only, without any Ministers or officials present. We should build on this precedent and invite other Asian leaders to meet us regularly and informally to discuss common problems, challenges and aspirations."

*Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*



Night scenes of Kuala Lumpur.







The flag of ASEAN has been changed to embrace all the 10 countries of Southeast Asia even though Cambodia has yet to join the organisation.

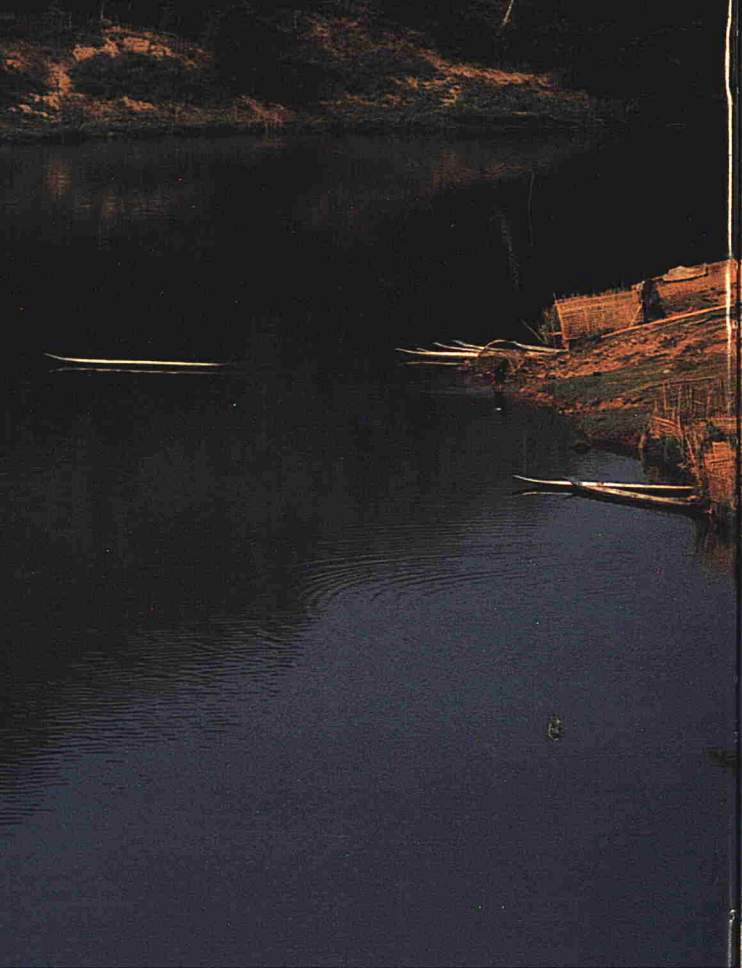
Representing a stable, peaceful, united and dynamic ASEAN, the four colours of the flag—blue, red, white and yellow—are also the main colours of the national flags of the member countries.

The blue stands for peace and stability, the red for courage and dynamism, the white for purity and the yellow for prosperity.

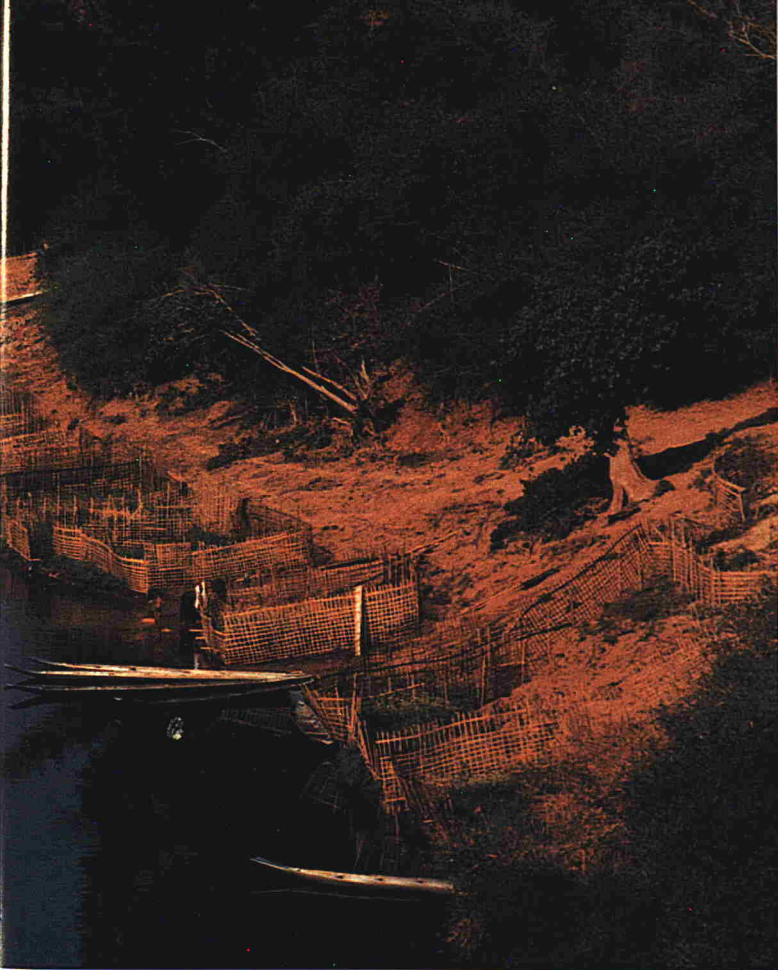
The 10 stalks of padi, the region's staple food, symbolises the dream of ASEAN's founding fathers for an ASEAN of all 10 nations in Southeast Asia bound together in friendship and solidarity.



The circle depicts the "Unity" of ASEAN.



There is a blend of the old and new, the skyscrapers in the cities and the rustic countryside, that speaks volumes about the charms and attractions of the region.



Interview

With PRESIDENT FIDEL RAMOS of the Philippines

QUESTION: *What has 30 years of ASEAN meant to the Philippines in particular, and the region in general?*

ANSWER: Amidst the Cold War and the turmoil in Indo-China, leaders of five founding members (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) formed in 1967 ASEAN to respond and protect their chosen political, economic and social systems by securing peace and stability in the Asian region.

Through the nations' sheer determination and hard work, ASEAN progressed to create a niche for itself as one of the most successful regional organisations of developing nations in the world. ASEAN has contributed to internal peace and stability in the region, providing mechanisms to keep disputes at bay among member states. Among its notable instruments are: the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, and the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANFWZ). The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) reflects the international recognition, credibility and respect that ASEAN has won in the arena of regional security affairs.

ASEAN economic cooperation has evolved at a pace comfortable to all its member countries. The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) is well on its way to maximizing the number of products with 0%-5% tariff reduction by the year 2000, and 0% by the year 2003. Trade in services is being liberalized. The ASEAN Industrial Area (AIA) aims to promote joint manufacturing activities, while the ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) is envisaged to realise the free flow of investments by 2020 in the region. Cooperation is likewise expanding in energy, transportation, communications and other strategic sectors.

ASEAN has continued to support sub-regional growth areas combining resources, manpower, capital, technology and managerial skills. The Mekong Basin is being developed under an ASEAN framework. The East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), which was conceived by the Philippines, is supported by Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

ASEAN collaboration extends to the functional areas of social development, the environment, drug control, culture and information, human resources development, science and technology, the civil service and people-to-people linkages. For the Philippines, ASEAN's internal processes, unity and solidarity have built for it confidence in the conduct of foreign relations and the pursuit of national interests. ASEAN has brought increased opportunities to explore economic and political relations with other ASEAN members and ten ASEAN Dialogue Partners. Regional peace and stability have earned for the Philippines, and the rest of ASEAN, a substantial rate of economic growth, counting the region among the most vibrant economic blocs in the world. ASEAN has also provided the Philippines a mechanism and venue for regular consultations on regional security, confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in a collective effort to resolve disputes and diffuse tension in the region.

Q: When APEC was first mooted, it was turned down by some ASEAN members for fear that it might over-shadow or dilute the bonds within ASEAN. Do you think the fear was justified by the events and programmes within APEC today?

A: No, because APEC and AFTA are complementary to each other. Both have similar policy thrusts of advancing trade and investment liberalization and facilitation in the region mainly through the gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers within a prescribed period. Under AFTA, ASEAN members are to maximize the number of products with tariff reduced from 0%-5% by year 2000, and 0% by year 2003. In APEC, member economies hope to achieve trade and investment liberalization and facilitation by 2010 for developed economies, and 2020 for developing economies. Since AFTA's schedule is way ahead of APEC's, ASEAN's activities under AFTA can pace its participation in APEC. Whatever ASEAN achieves under AFTA will definitely pave the way for a greater impact of ASEAN's participation in APEC.

Q: Will APEC overtake ASEAN in importance and relevance to the region?

A: No, because advance made in ASEAN can be regarded as advances in APEC and vice versa. Contrary to fears that membership in APEC might dilute the bonds of ASEAN member countries, ASEAN has enhanced cooperation among its members within the context of APEC, generally moving ahead as a unit, and oftentimes taking a leadership role within the bigger economic grouping. In APEC, ASEAN has found more intra- and inter-regional economic opportunities, widening its export markets and investment sources. But with the concomitant stiffer competition of a wider market, closer interaction and cooperation among its member countries will be a key factor to the success of ASEAN's participation in bigger regional economic blocs such as APEC.

Q: What are the strength and achievements of ASEAN in the last 30 years? Conversely, what are the weaknesses or failures of the grouping?

A: A unique strength of ASEAN lies in the manner by which it conducts its relations. ASEAN's success as a regional grouping has been brought about by an approach that is based on consensus and respect; steady in its progress and informal in its conduct. The ASEAN approach has been the only realistic way for ASEAN to get to where it is now.

From the beginning, ASEAN has opted to rely on consultations and consensus when formulating its collective actions and decisions and not so much on legal documents and complicated institutions.

Another strength of ASEAN is the adherence to the principles embodied in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord and the ASEAN Treaty of Amity. These principles uphold respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states; full acceptance of the different political styles, systems and processes adopted by each member state; non-resort to force or threat of the use of force or intimidation; and peaceful settlement of disputes. Difficulties in ASEAN

are really challenges to be hurdled. One challenge is ASEAN's enlargement. Once it comprises the ten nations in Southeast Asia, ASEAN will acquire greater political and economic weight, even as ASEAN's diversity will increase. Other challenges comprise the variety of problems in the region, such as the growing scarcity of resources, particularly of food and fuel; care for the environment; safe use of nuclear power and proper disposal of nuclear waste; increased movement of goods, services and capital; movement of labour; the upsurge of information technology; and the improvement of the coordination between public and private/business sectors.

Q: Why is it so important that ASEAN must encompass all the 10 Southeast Asian countries at this stage?

A: It fulfills the vision of the ASEAN founding fathers of a regional group free from the animosities, friction and barriers of the past. With an ASEAN-10, we can consolidate understanding, solidarity and cooperation, as well as insure steady progress for the members of the Southeast Asia family. ASEAN-10 is in the national interest of the Philippines, which is grounded firmly on regional peace, stability and sustainable growth. Today, with the establishment of other economic regional blocs, ASEAN has to move faster in intensifying economic cooperation. Economic integration will allow for the development of a possible competitive regional division of labour and resource-pooling, lead to greater economies of scale and become an impetus to foreign direct investment. Furthermore, it is hoped that as economic conditions improve in the region, ASEAN societies will advance as they imbibe new ideas brought about by growth and development.

Q: Where would you like to see ASEAN headed for in the next 30 years?

A: Within 30 years, ASEAN will be a region of peace and prosperity. The region must maintain the vitality of its security dialogue, particularly regarding the ASEAN Regional Forum, with fresh and innovative thinking on regional affairs. There should be greater integration between ASEAN's economic and functional cooperation programmes (that is, aspects of social growth such as education, human resources development, science and technology and the environment).

The achievement of physical and material well-being can be attained through an open market mechanism characterised by a freer flow of goods, services, capital and labour; extensive investment in human resource development; and enhanced political, economic and social stability. A common ASEAN identity will, hopefully, emerge from a socially cohesive and caring ASEAN, a technologically competitive ASEAN, and a clean and green ASEAN.



A S E A N

ONE REGION ONE VISION

CHAPTER

3

THE DEVELOPMENTS
OF THE REGION



CYBERJAYA - CITY CENTRE





“Southeast Asia where, in the last half century or so, a number of brutal wars took place, is now witnessing a completely new state of relations.

Gone are the dark days for the Southeast Asian region. However, the people in the region will never forget that wars and conflicts not only took a lot of human lives, caused untold destruction but also pushed many countries in the region to a state of confrontation, hostility, thereby putting a brake to the development of all countries in the region.

Today, in addition to these invaluable experiences is the pressing need for development in all Southeast Asian nations. More than ever, preserving an environment of peace and stability for the whole region and fostering an effective cooperation among the member states of the Association are important factors for the future well being of each and every State in our Association.”

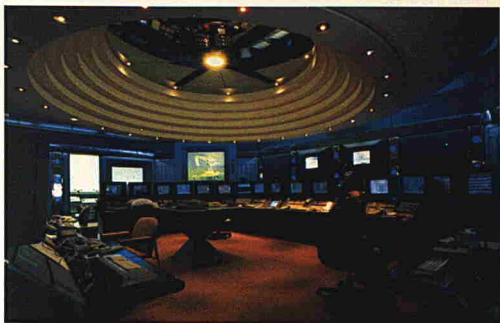
*Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet of Vietnam,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*



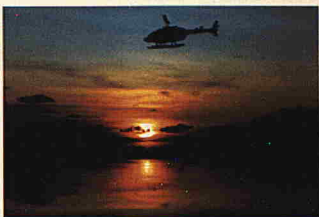


Right and Left Pages:
ASEAN makes a quantum leap into the 21st century with more ports, telecommunications, Information Technology and heavy industries.









"As ASEAN cooperation intensifies in these various fields, a common ASEAN identity will gradually take root among the sectors of the public involved. This is consistent with our aim of making ASEAN not merely an association of states but a community of people."

*Prime Minister Banham Silpa-archa of Thailand,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*



"Considering that economic growth and development are directly influenced by the international trade situation, we have committed ourselves to market liberalisation and the fostering of an open multilateral trading system. We have opened up our economies and instituted reforms in our trade regimes in order to integrate with the world economy. Indeed, the most significant progress has been achieved in the area of trade with the implementation of the CEPT Scheme for AFTA which entails not only the reduction of tariffs, elimination of quantitative restrictions, and other non-tariff barriers but also trade facilitation measures such as harmonisation of tariff nomenclatures, customs valuations and procedures. In this regard, Indonesia welcomes the decision to accelerate further the time frame for the completion of the CEPT Scheme for AFTA from the year 2008 to the year 2003. This decision has further underlined our resolve to enhance ASEAN economic cooperation and strengthen our international competitiveness."

*President Soeharto of Indonesia,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995*



"We must not neglect the next generation in ASEAN. More than 50% of ASEAN's population is below the age of 20. A large number of young ASEAN citizens are in the schools and universities. Our young must be given the opportunities to interact and to build empathy and rapport among themselves. We must encourage more youth activities within ASEAN. This will increase the bonds among the future leaders of ASEAN.

Our principle challenges are clear. First, to deepen and broaden our security and economic cooperation. Second, to manage our expansion to ensure that ASEAN retains its solidarity. Third, how to transmit the ASEAN way to the next generation of leaders and people. I am confident our decisions, at the last Summit in Singapore and in this Summit in Bangkok, the birthplace of ASEAN, will prepare us to meet these challenges."

*Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah
of Brunei Darussalam
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok,
December 14, 1995.*





Right and Left Pages:
Malaysian ventures into the automobile industry—turning one man's vision into reality.





"The ASEAN Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to seek an early peaceful solution to the overlapping claims in the South China Sea in accordance with the provisions of the TAC, the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea of 1992 as well as international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982."

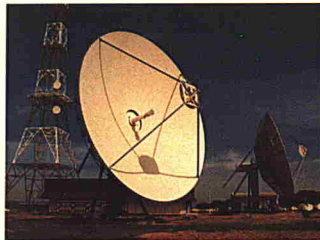
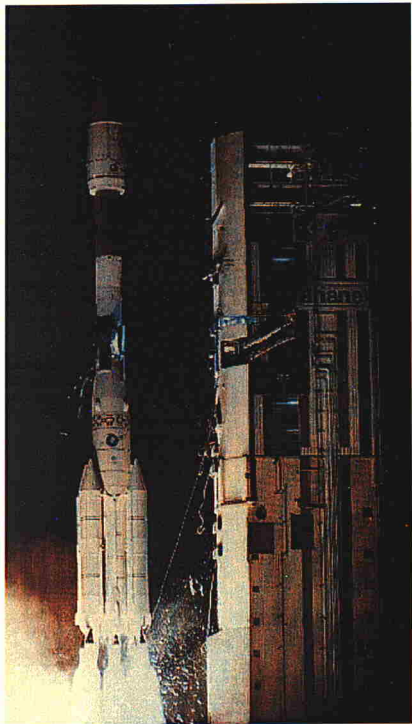
*Joint Communique, 1st Informal ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting,
Jakarta, November 30, 1996*





"There are roughly half a billion people in the ASEAN countries now. They are not the richest people but even though their per capita income may be low, their total purchasing power is still considerable. Besides, with their high growth rates, their economic clout must increase rapidly. Their low cost of production, the skills and diligence of their people are assets which will make them attractive to investors and traders alike. The future is indeed bright for the ASEAN countries. We know what we must do collectively. We know what we must do individually. And we have the strength to do what is best for us and to defend ourselves. If we fail, we can blame no one but ourselves. We must not fail. That must be our resolve."

*Prime Minister Dr Mahathir
Mohamad of Malaysia, 30th ASEAN
Ministerial Meeting, Kuala Lumpur,
July 24, 1997.*



Interview

With PRIME MINISTER GOH CHOK TONG of Singapore

The following are written replies by Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong to questions posed by Bernama on the occasion on the 30th anniversary of ASEAN.

Question: *What has 30 years of ASEAN meant to Singapore in particular, and the region in general?*

Answer: ASEAN has given Southeast Asia peace and stability, which are necessary conditions for Singapore and the other ASEAN members to grow and prosper. If Southeast Asia had remained fractious and unstable, few foreign investors would have come here. Our countries would have remained poor and underdeveloped. Singapore would not be what it is today.

Economic success has given the ASEAN countries a strong sense of confidence. With the strong overarching co-operative spirit, ASEAN has moved on to play a key role in regional initiatives such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), ASEAN Regional Forum and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEAN has given the region influence.

Q: *When APEC was first mooted, it was turned down by some ASEAN countries like Malaysia for fear that it might over-shadow or dilute the bonds within ASEAN. Do you think the fear was justified by the events and programmes within APEC today? Will APEC overtake ASEAN in importance and relevance to the region?*

A: There was indeed concern that APEC could dilute ASEAN. But APEC was going to proceed anyway, with or without some ASEAN members participating. So, we felt it was better for ASEAN to be inside APEC and be able to influence it than be outside without any influence. ASEAN has indeed influenced APEC's evolution. Indonesia contributed the Bogor Declaration in 1994 and the Philippines, the Manila Action Plan for APEC (MAPA) in 1996. ASEAN aims to be a free trade area by the year 2003. This is 17 years ahead of the APEC's goal of 2020. ASEAN can be the catalyst for a freer trade regime within the whole of APEC. It has not been and will not be diluted by APEC.

Q: *What are the strengths and achievements of ASEAN? Conversely, what are the weaknesses or failures of the grouping?*

A: The most important achievement of ASEAN is its ability to build a Southeast Asian community. Since ASEAN's inception, no member country has sought to use force or the threat of force to settle any dispute with a fellow member country. We have entrenched a habit of consultation and cooperation, and evolved a culture of consensus building. For the first time in Southeast Asian history, there is a common regional consciousness. We are able to see beyond immediate national interests. We focus on enhancing common interests while minimising differences. However, the need for consultation and consensus sometimes means foregoing hard choices and reaching for something more palatable for all. It means moving at the pace of the slowest

which sometimes means no movement at all. This is a weakness of ASEAN.

Q: Why is it so important that ASEAN must encompass all the 10 Southeast Asian countries at this stage when Myanmar has been singled out by Washington for more isolation? Coupled with the political uncertainties in Cambodia, is this a politically wise move?

A: Apart from fulfilling the dreams of ASEAN's founding fathers, an expanded ASEAN will make for a cohesive Southeast Asian community. It may take another 30 years, but if ASEAN 9 (and later ASEAN 10 with Cambodia) extrapolates the goals and achievements of ASEAN 7, Southeast Asia will enjoy an unprecedented period of peace, stability and prosperity. ASEAN takes a long view of its interests. It includes neighbours of different views because it wants to forge common interests and prevent differences from erupting into conflicts. It is better to include and accommodate than exclude and reject disparate interests.

Q: Where would you like to see ASEAN headed for in the next 30 years?

A: I would like to see ASEAN economies becoming more integrated. ASEAN countries should compete as a single economic area against other bigger countries and regions rather than separately. Closer integration can be achieved in the physical and soft infrastructure. We can link up transportation networks, utility grids and telecommunication network to facilitate the flow of goods and services within Asean. At the same time, we can collaborate in areas like human resource development, capital markets, administrative and legal frameworks and customs procedures so as to encourage harmonisation of processes, sharing of ideas, information and talents across ASEAN. Our private sector should play the key role in economic development, but ASEAN governments should oil the wheel of the market mechanism.

Q: Singapore has emerged as the most economically developed or advanced nation amongst the ASEAN countries. Do you see Singapore taking any particular leading role in shaping programmes or action plans to raise the economic development of the other member countries, especially the Indochinese states?

A: Human resource development is the key to economic and social development, and we would like to help here within our resources and capabilities. Singapore has a technical assistance scheme called the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP). Since 1992, about two thousand nationals from Southeast Asian countries have attended training in Singapore. Singapore also recently set up two other programmes specifically for the Indochinese countries and Myanmar. These are the US\$10 million Indochinese Assistance Fund (ICAF) and the US\$3 million Myanmar Technical Assistance Fund (MTAF). The ICAF and MTAF were established to assist the reconstruction and opening of economies which are switching from a centrally planned to a market system. We are also pooling expertise

and resources with others to offer training courses to Southeast Asian countries under our Third Country Training Programme (TCTP). The most recent TCTP was concluded during my visit to Thailand in June. Under the Singapore-Thailand TCTP, Singapore and Thailand will provide training to other nationals, especially those from Indochina and Myanmar. Singapore's training courses include airport and port management, environmental management, English language training, banking and finance, information technology and productivity improvement. We will also increase places in our schools, polytechnics and universities for students from Southeast Asia. Grants and scholarships will be given to good students. We hope that these students will contribute to the development of their own countries in the near future.

Q: Economic cooperation within ASEAN has always been seen as lacking or slow, compared with the cooperation on the political front. At one time, the grouping was described as a single-issue organisation, moving to confront or counter any issue of the day. What should ASEAN do to add more "economic meat" to its original objective of socio-economic development of the region?

A: An expanded ASEAN, with a population of about 500 million and a combined GDP close to US\$1 trillion, is the third largest regional grouping in the world after the European Union (EU) and the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA). It is a much larger market than MERCOSUR (Mercado Comun Sudamericano) and SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). ASEAN should look beyond AFTA and integrate its economies quickly. It should liberalise investment rules and create a common ASEAN Investment Area. It could also liberalise the financial sector for each other. WTO and the United States will press for "free trade" in financial services. It is better for ASEAN to prepare for this by liberalising its financial sector for its members first. ASEAN could also consider an open skies policy for its members, not to be achieved overnight, but at a pace each member is comfortable with. ASEAN's new members are likely to face initial difficulties in integrating their economies with ASEAN (although there is no doubt that their economies will ultimately benefit handsomely from such integration). The more developed ASEAN economies can help speed up the economic development of the new and prospective members. The proposed Mekong Basin Development Cooperation project is a good one. It will help the Indochinese countries catch up with the rest of the region. The proposed high-speed railway network from Singapore through Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam to Kunming, China, is another big piece of "meat" for the region.



A S E A N

ONE REGION ONE VISION

CHAPTER

4

THE PEOPLE, CULTURE
AND WAY OF LIFE
OF ASEAN













The future of ASEAN is as bright as the smiles on the faces of her children.

In them lies the hopes and aspirations of the founding fathers for a peaceful and prosperous Southeast Asia, at par with the advance nations but with its traditions and culture intact.









The dream of every ASEAN man and woman is universal...a decent living,
a peaceful and safe environment, free from diseases and wars.







“ASEAN shall raise awareness of ASEAN among its people, in particular the younger generation, and to instil in them a consciousness of the spirit and identity embodied in ASEAN, by harnessing all appropriate modes and technologies in the media and communications, education and through greater interaction among its people.”

ASEAN Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995





Most of all, the ASEAN man, woman and child value the freedom of worship, be it in a mosque, temple or church.

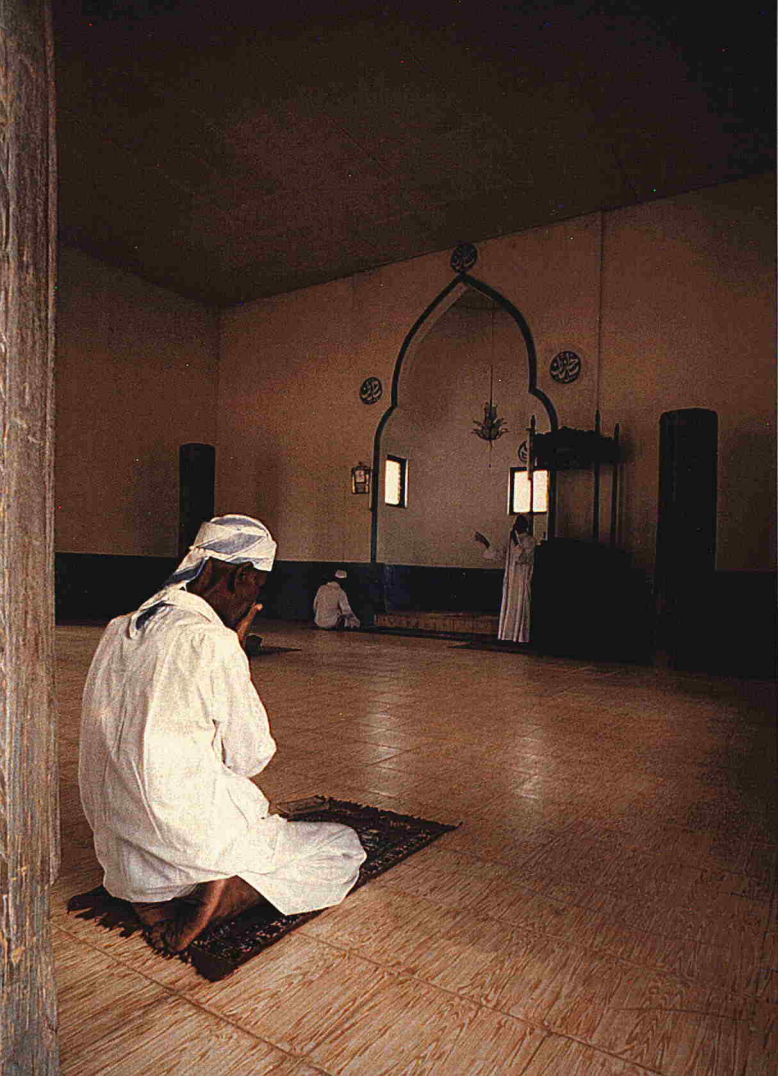


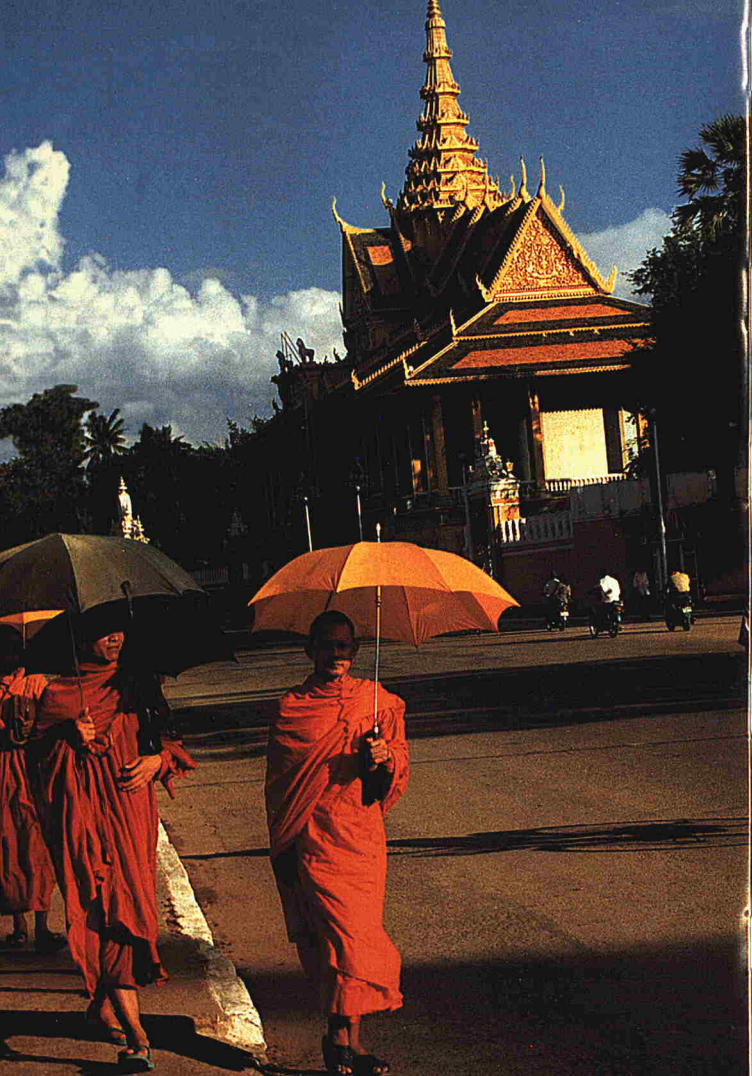


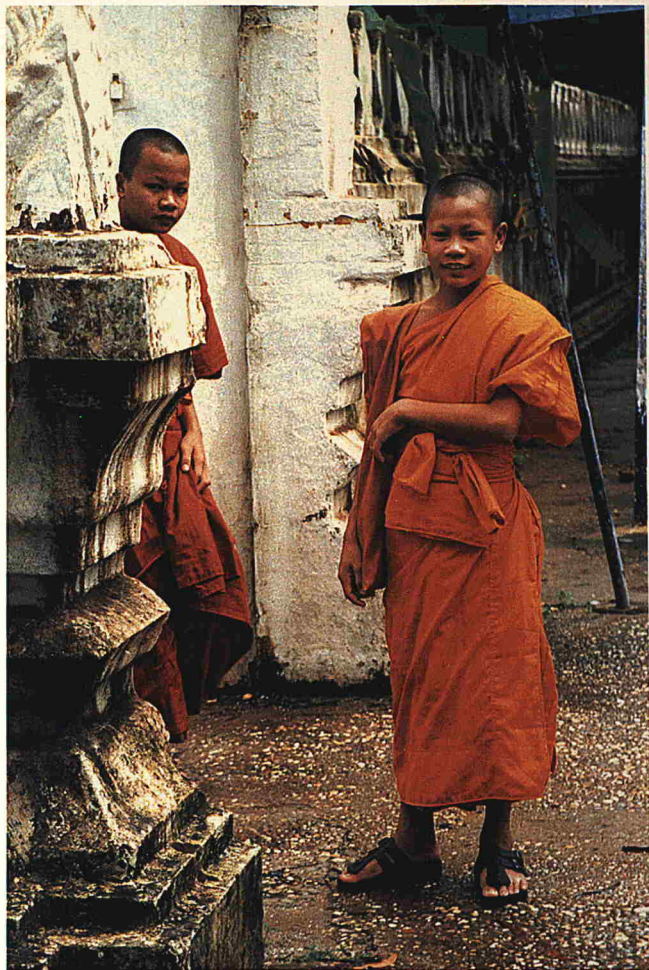
All the major and minor religions of the world have a home in ASEAN—Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Taoism, Confucianism, Bahaism, Paganism and Animism

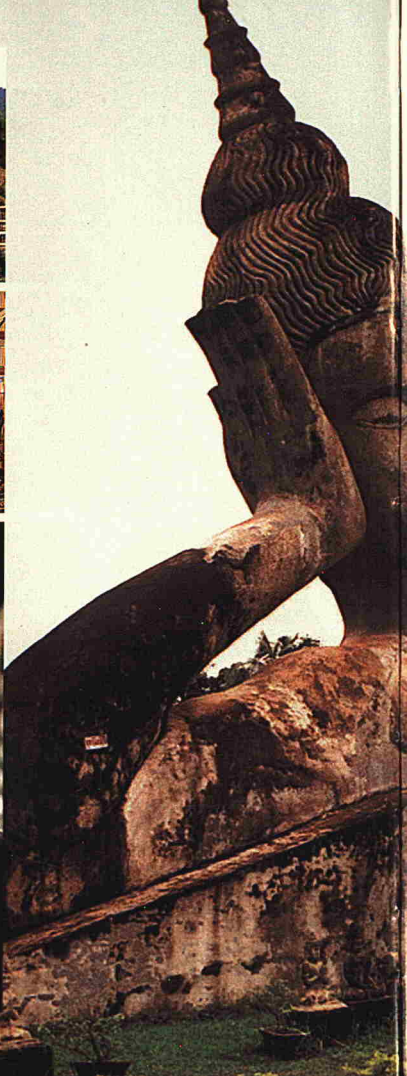
Religious festivals are also a time for rejoicing and sharing among neighbours and friends of different creeds.

It is also not uncommon to see a mosque, temple or church within walking distance of each other in the landscape of ASEAN.











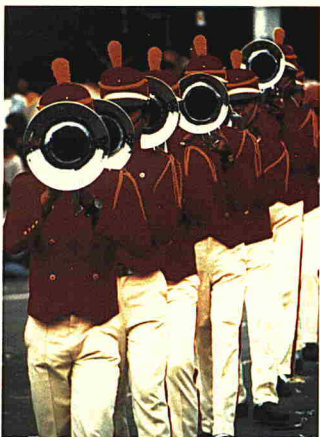




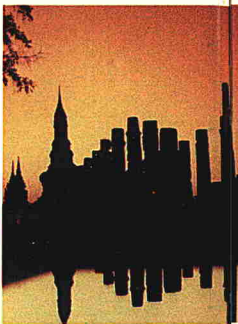


Festivals, songs and dances are central to the life of ASEAN. Through them, they stamp their identities as a people, a culture and a nation.







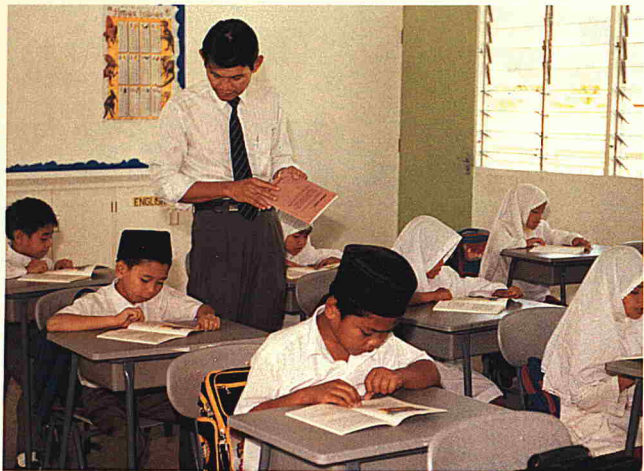


ASEAN is rich in customs and traditions. Every country has unique practices according to its religious beliefs. It has somehow become the symbol of unity and prosperity in the region.









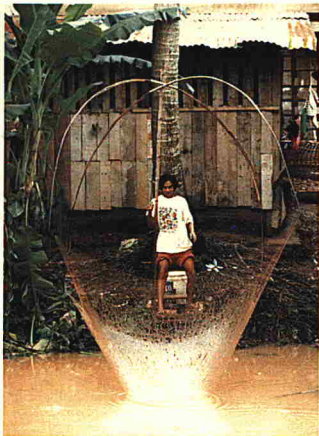
Typical scenes of ASEAN: Schools in the cities, barrios or kampungs where children are taught and trained; open-air bazaars or markets; ultra-modern banking facilities or the womenfolk in their attires that tell of traditional or religious upbringing.





"Unity in Diversity" is more than just a slogan in ASEAN. It is a statement of acceptance of the differences between the people, culture, religions and traditions, as much as the differences in governance and socio-economic progress.





“Women are a force to be reckoned with in ASEAN. From motherhood to business partners in the slums, rural or urban areas, they shoulder their share of responsibility with the menfolk for a better life under the sun.

The heads of government agreed that ASEAN should harness the potentials and capabilities of women towards ensuring their maximum involvement in the future development of the region.”

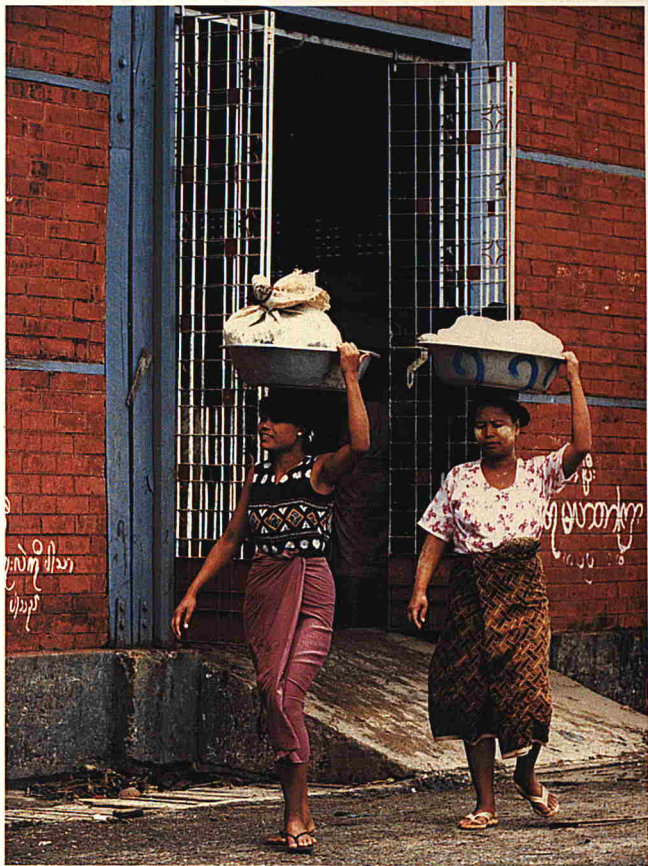
Joint Communique, 3rd ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting, Manila, December 14-15, 1987.

“ASEAN functional (cooperation) shall be designed for a wider involvement and increased participation by women in the development of ASEAN countries in order to meet their needs and aspirations. This cooperation shall also extend to the development of children to realise their full potentials...”

ASEAN Singapore Declaration, January 28, 1992.

“ASEAN shall work towards the equitable and effective participation of women in all fields and levels of society.”

ASEAN Bangkok Summit Declaration, December 15, 1995.

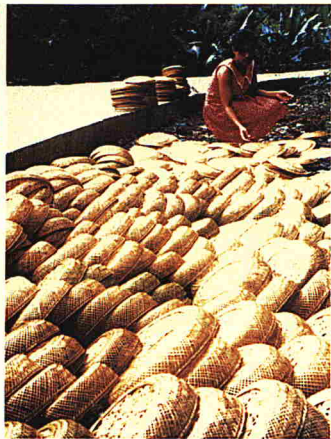


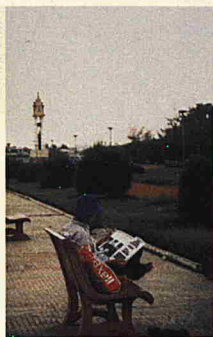


"The world unfolding before our eyes is one where technology and economics fuse as never before. In such a world, what will determine continued prosperity will be human capital. As ASEAN societies develop and grow, a well-educated citizenry will be indispensable to sustain economic and economic development. ASEAN needs to place human development squarely at the centre of our cooperation to enable our people to realise their full potential to contribute towards the region's further progress. This collaboration could be in such areas as research and development, upgrading of human resources and technology transfer."

*Prime Minister Banham Silpa-archa of Thailand,
5th ASEAN Summit, Bangkok, December 14, 1995.*







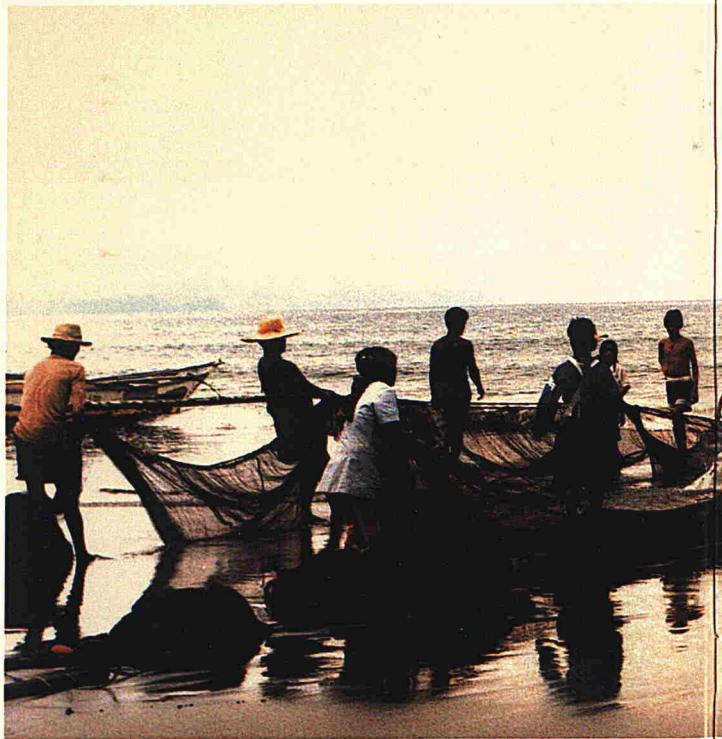




“ASEAN shall reinforce its efforts to improve the quality of life of its people by ensuring social justice, improving the quality of and access to social services and working towards the reduction of poverty.”

ASEAN Bangkok Declaration, 1995.

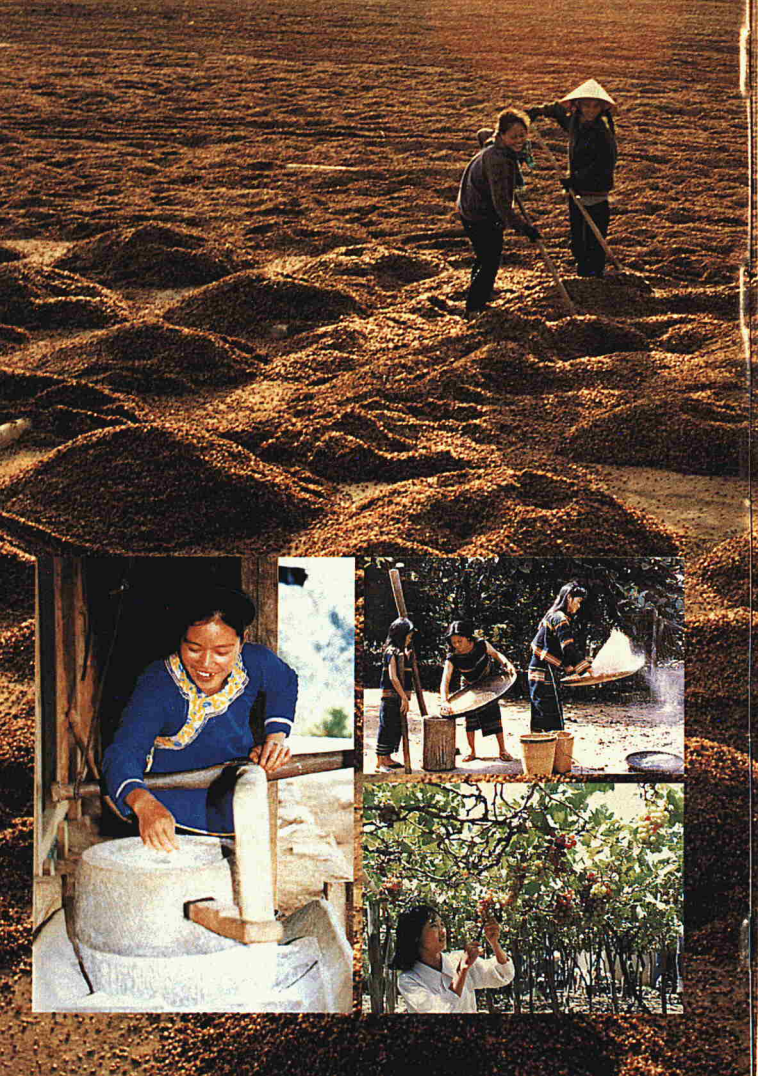


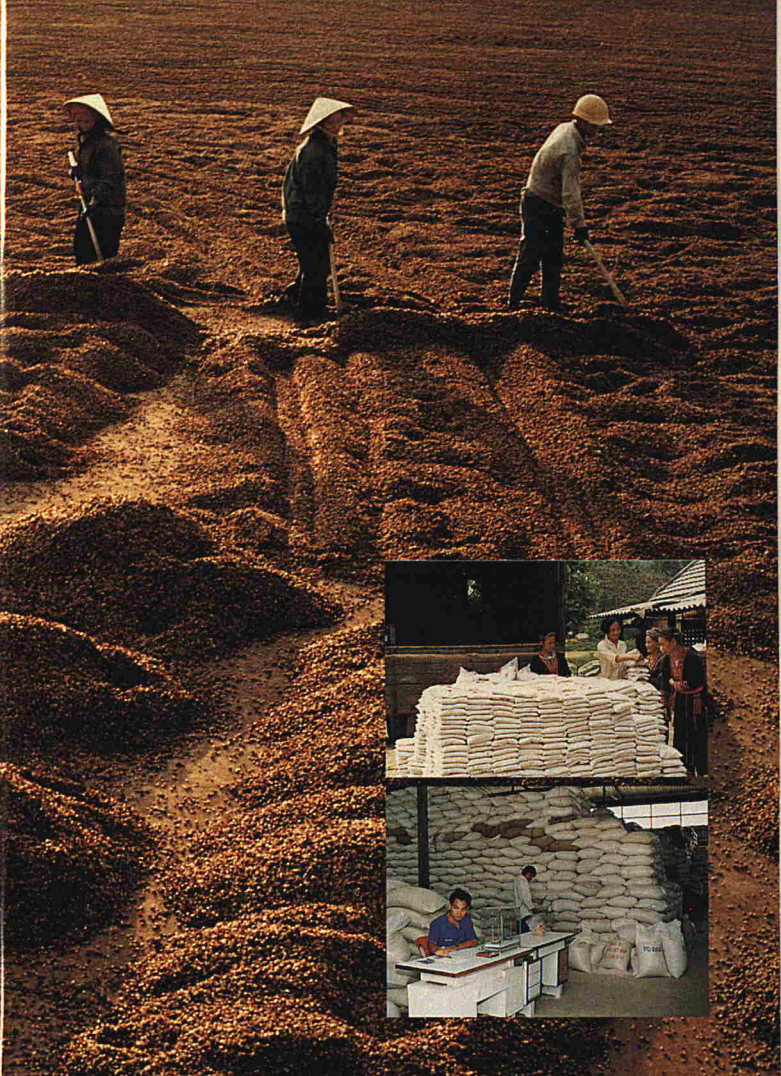














"A Land of Plenty"—Rural ASEAN is still very much in the grip of an agrarian economy and will be so for many more years to come.

As the region industrialises, agriculture will remain an integral part of its economy and a way of life of many of its people that is handed down for generations.

Food production is a key barometer of the health of the people of ASEAN.







Above: Laotians at work.

Left: An Indonesian woman tending to her pepper vines. ASEAN is the biggest producer of pepper in the world

Below: A bazaar in Vientiane.

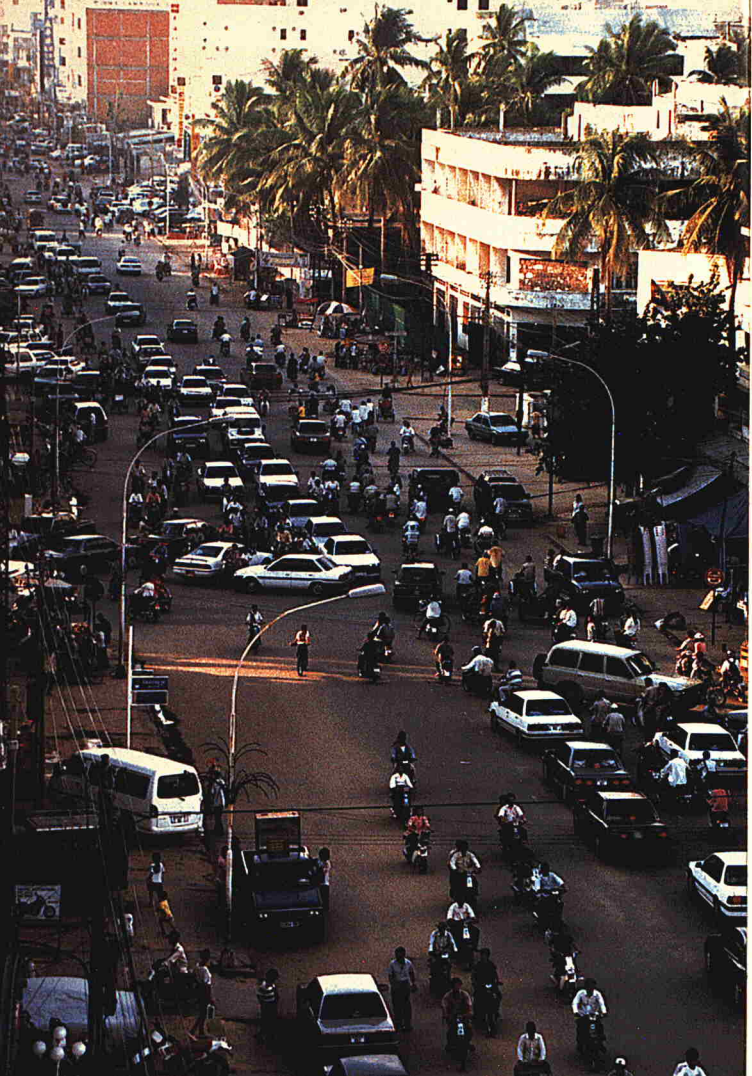




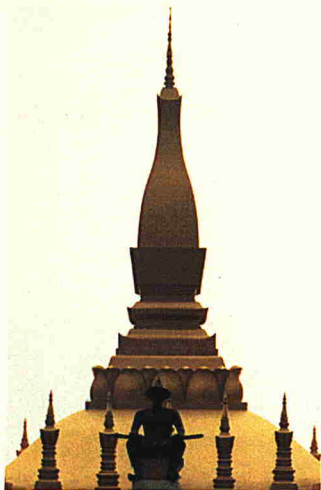
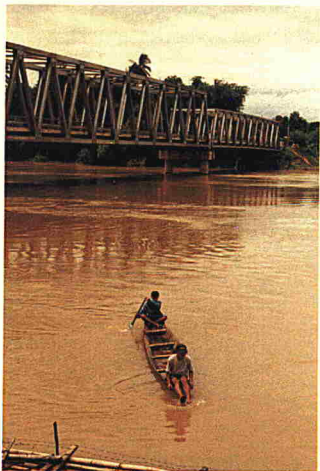
Paddy fields are common sight.













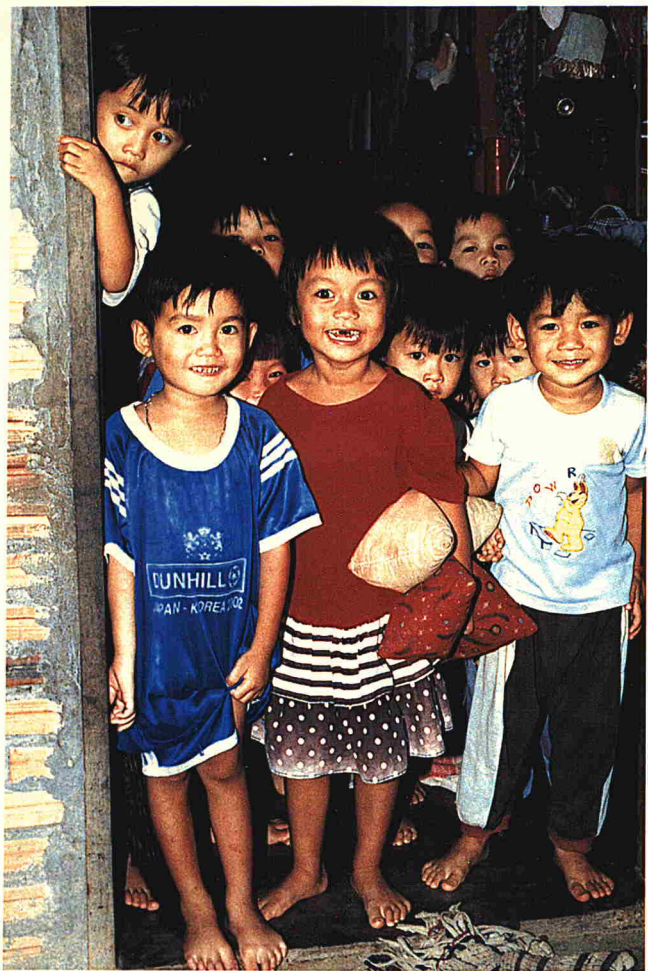


Right and Left Pages:
Faces of Vietnam, which became the seventh member of ASEAN in 1995.

“To make ASEAN relevant in the next millennium, we need to have a longer term vision of what we want to be as an Association. Twenty five years from today do we foresee ASEAN becoming a common market like the former EEC? Are we setting our sights to be a single market or an economic union ala the EU?”

*Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad,
29th ASEAN Economic Minister's Meeting,
October 16, 1997.*





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