

ASEAN BAZAAR – Held in conjunction with ASEAN’s 40th Anniversary

The commitment of ASEAN leaders over the years which had enabled regional cooperation to flourish and contribute to the economic and social well being of its people, should be constantly reminded among ourselves in nurturing ASEAN and keeping it central to the lives of the people of Southeast Asia for another 40 years, and more, said ASEAN-COCI National Chairperson, Dato’ Kamaruddin Siaraf when delivering his opening remarks at the opening ceremony of the ASEAN Bazaar in Kuala Lumpur on 9th November 2007.

Dato’ Kamaruddin Siaraf who is also the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Information, Malaysia said that although the level of awareness of ASEAN has steadily increased as we celebrate ASEAN Day on a more concerted manner over the last few years, there is a need to ensure that the momentum is sustained by continuously nurturing a sense of “ASEANness” and the feeling of togetherness at all levels.

Therefore it is vital that ASEAN continue to strengthen its cooperation and linkages among member countries in moving forward and facing new challenges.

The ASEAN Bazaar, organized by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage Malaysia was held in conjunction with ASEAN’s 40th anniversary. The Bazaar was officiated by the wife of the Deputy Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage Malaysia, Datin Betty Lee Sau Leng.

In her opening address, Datin Betty said it is important that we persistently preserved and strategically promote ASEAN unique and fascinating cultural diversity to create awareness among the younger generation, to ensure their identity will not be lost in the unstoppable waves of post modernization and development.

“Culture is capable of transcending economic, political and social borders and is regarded as one of the universal means of fostering benevolence between nationalities, besides serving as a mechanism to cultivate regional stability.”

She said, as a region of multi cultural facets and having a colourful diversity that co-exist amongst the various ethnic groups, ASEAN has enriched and taught us the importance of nurturing and maintaining the spirit of harmony and unity amongst ourselves.

Besides promoting the exhibition and sale of watercolour paintings, batik paintings and ASEAN textiles, handicrafts, food, clothes, jewellerys and accessories items are also displayed at the bazaar. Other activities include the screening of ASEAN films and documentaries.

ASEAN – COCI

Cooperation in culture and information has been one of the ASEAN's main pillars since the signing of the Bangkok Declaration in 1967. The ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information is currently the body responsible for formulating and implementing projects and activities in these areas.

In 1985, the Committee on Culture and Information formed four working groups to manage and implement its projects. These included Literary Works and ASEAN Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, Radio/Television and Films/Video, as well as Print and Interpersonal Media.

ASEAN – COCI has conducted more than 300 cultural and information projects throughout the region.