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Simultaneous meetings made possible

THANKS to modern technology, economic meetings such as the Kankeiren Asean Management seminar opened yesterday by the Prime Minister can now be held simultaneously at various locations.

The Kankeiren seminar featured live satellite video conferencing speeches by speakers from different countries.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Dr Supachai Panitchapakdi delivered his welcoming address live from Bangkok after Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, followed by vice-chairman of Kankeiren and executive president of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co Ltd Yoichi Morishita, who delivered his keynote address from Osaka, Japan.

Three seminar halls, three speakers and three sets of audiences in three different countries - all linked via multiple video screens and image recorders.

The effect was not lost on Dr Mahathir, who used it to make a point:

"This technological achievement is truly a sign of the times," he told the audience gathered in Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Osaka.

"Even though Osaka is one hour ahead of Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok is one hour behind us - you see how Kuala Lumpur is always agreeable to taking the middle road, to playing the role as the balance in matters large or small."

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