

SPEECH BY: DATO' SERI DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
(PRIME MINISTER)

EVENT: THE PRESENTATION AND CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 27TH ASIAN FILM
FESTIVAL

VENUE: ANGKASAPURI, KUALA LUMPUR

DATE: 14 SEP 1982

TIME:

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Syed Kechik, Pengerusi Jawatankuasa
Penganjur dan Presiden Persatuan Pengeluar-Pengeluar Filem
Malaysia;

Yang Berhormat Menteri-Menteri;

Dif-Dif Kehormat;

Tuan-Tuan dan Puan-Puan yang dihormati sekalian.

Terlebih dahulu saya mengucapkan selamat datang,
terutamanya kepada dif-dif dari luar negeri, yang turut sama
menyerikan Pesta Filem Asia Ke 27 ini.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. On behalf of my wife and myself, I wish to express our
thanks and appreciation to the Organising Committee for
inviting us to this star-studded glittering occasion of the
closing and award presentation ceremony of this annual film
festival.

3. This is the 27th festival to be held in the Asia-
Pacific region, under the aegis of the Federation of Motion
Picture Producers Association of Asia, of which Malaysia is
a member. This is also the second time that it is held in
our capital city, after a lapse of 23 years.

4. As one who is interested in the growth of the film
industry in Asia I must, in all sincerity, congratulate the
film-makers for their progress and the organisers for their
efforts in presenting to us tonight such a beautiful array
of stars and other screen personalities. This show is
worthy of this still glamorous industry.

5. As for Malaysia, it is indeed an honour for us to play
host to our distinguished guests from the Asia-Pacific
region coinciding as it does with the celebration of the
25th anniversary of our Independence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Amidst the flurry of festival activities, members of
the Board of Directors of the Association still found time
to hold their annual meeting to appraise their past

achievements and to chart their future course. Whatever they have resolved at this meeting should certainly go a long way towards developing the film industry of the region. In conjunction with this Festival, a symposium with "Towards A Common Film Market" as a theme was also held, which I believe will enhance the efforts for our film-makers to develop greater interaction and rapport that is much needed to augment the growth of the film industry. I believe the fruits of their deliberation will pave the way for greater and stronger co-operation, not only for those in the film industry, but also the nations of the Asia-Pacific region.

7. Film makers, whether they are producers, directors, script writers, actors and actresses, are endowed with such special qualities that they can contribute in one way or the other towards the happiness of their audience. At the same time, of course, they are able to assist in the process of moulding public opinion and achieving better understanding of the world at large. In utilising the vast wealth of knowledge at their disposal for presentation to the audience film makers have an important role to play. In a real sense they are the personification of the mass media. Collectively they form the most effective media machinery able to reach out to society at large. They can make the audience happy or, they can make them cry. They can make them knowledgeable or they can confuse them absolutely. Above all they can inculcate positive values so essential to nation building and the development processes.

8. In the context of developing Malaysia, I see their vast potential in putting across our commitments and reassuring Malaysians of the targets of the nation's strategy in sustaining the growth of a happy and vibrant country as envisaged in our New Economic Policy. Most of you present tonight are leaders in your own right, and you have contributed very significantly towards the growth of the film industry to the economic advantage of your respective countries. The potential for advancement in your sphere of responsibility cannot be overstated. With the changing times, and all the opportunities ahead of you, I feel certain that as the cream of the screen world, you will accept the challenge of forging a happy and prosperous future.

9. We in Malaysia have established a corporation which is known as FINAS, that is the National Film Development Corporation, whose function is to assist in the healthy growth of the local film industry. At the same time we expect the Corporation to safe-guard those gracious and high moral values that we have inherited. Its terms of reference include among other things the promotion and regulation of local productions of high quality and also to ensure that adequate facilities exist for screening the films. It is our belief that with the expertise available at FINAS it can be of use in the improvement of the quality of local production. However to be truly profitable local films must

be good enough to be shown outside of this country.

10. I understand, that the Shaw and Cathay circuits have been cooperating with FINAS and the local producers in meeting their needs. Still I believe the two theatre giants could do more in assisting our local producers to realise their cherished dreams. The lament of our local producers does not end there. Like movie-makers elsewhere, they are also seeking to expand their present outlets and to exploit the market centres beyond our shores. In this respect I believe FINAS has initiated the move to market their films to Indonesia under the free exchange programme that was formalised recently. Given the time and improved technology and expertise it would be possible to eventually secure exhibition facilities beyond our present circuit.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. Let me conclude by congratulating the winners of the awards. For those who were not quite fortunate at this festival, I must ask them not to despair. There is always another time. As for the winners, however, I must ask them not to rest on their laurels. Let your success inspire you to greater achievements.
Thank you.