

Address by Enche Hussein Onn, Minister
of Education at the Foundation Stone
Laying Ceremony of RECSAM at Glugor,
Penang on 9th. September, 1971 at 10.00am

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His Excellency Mr Jack W. Lydman, the U.S. Ambassador
to Malaysia, Enche Hshak bin Hj. Pateh Akhir, Chairman
of RECSAM, Governing ~~Board~~ ^{Board}, distinguish guests, ladies
and gentlemen.

I am greatly honouored for being invited to lay the
Foundation Stone of the SEAMEO Regional Centre for
Education in Science and Mathematics. To-day's ceremony
is an historic occassion. It marks the beginning of the
construction of permanent facilities for RECSAM, which
will ensure the solidarity of efforts of SEAMEO countries
to improve science and mathematics education in this
region.

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Developing countries, having recognised the importance
of modernising their school science and mathematics
education programmes in order to provide the groundwork
for the training of scientific and technical manpower
required for development, are making strenuous efforts
to improve their school curricula. It has been realised
that the bottleneck to such worthy efforts is the acute
shortage in the region of qualified and creative education
innovators, who are competent to decide what practical
measure/s can and should be taken to achieve real
improvements. This shortage will become more and more

severe in the coming years ^{with} if the expansion of educational needs. Key personnel, by the hundreds ~~or~~ thousands, need to be given the training which should be action as well as problem-oriented. Fortunately for South-East Asia, such a heavy task has been entrusted to RECSAM by SEAMEO, which as you know, is dedicated to promote regional co-operation through education, science and culture.

Starting with the construction of Phase I buildings, the Centre will be able to develop a personality of its own, as one of the world's foremost regional leadership training centres of excellence, in the fields of science and mathematics education.

By early 1974, RECSAM will have full modern facilities for implementing a full-range of action oriented training, curriculum research, development and evaluation courses, and instructional materials and proto-type equipment production activities. In addition, it will have an information and documentation centre for collecting and disseminating science and mathematics education, and for serving as a clearing house in South-East Asia. It will hold regular regional conferences and workshops in order to assist countries in South-East Asia to keep abreast or ahead in the improvement

of science and mathematics education programmes.

Judging from the reports of the Director and the Chairman of RECSAM's Governing Board, RECSAM has achieved remarkable success in the last 3 years. During these years, it has trained more than 350 key teacher-educators and educationists in South-East Asia, for leadership roles in science and mathematics curricula reforms. It is indeed very praiseworthy when we consider the difficulties of running these courses and other activities on borrowed premises.

I wish to congratulate the Governing Board for its wise professional guidance, and to the small staff of RECSAM for its dedication and hardwork.

I am pleased to learn that with more facilities available by ~~early~~^{early} next year, RECSAM has planned to hold 19 leadership courses in training, curriculum research and evaluation in science and mathematics for 380 key personnel from member countries. I am confident that RECSAM will play its vital role effectively as a regional agent of change and innovation in providing member countries with sufficient local, competent and

creative leaders and innovators for reforms in science and mathematics education.

Malaysia greatly appreciates the generous contributions of the United States Government of the sum of ~~M~~\$8 million for the cost of RECSAM buildings, facilities and equipment. This contribution represents 50% of the total capital and operating costs. I wish to say that although Malaysia is providing the other 50% for the operational costs of RECSAM for 5 years beginning July 1970, it regards itself as a donor for the benefits of SEAMEO. I wish also to thank the British Government, the Japanese Government, the Biological Science Curriculum Centre, the UNESCO, the Commonwealth Education Development Organisation (CEDO) and other institutions, for the valuable technical assistance and donations of equipment and materials given to the Centre. RECSAM needs more assistance in cash or in kind, in order to carry out its vital educational functions. Contributions or donations from philanthropists, governments, international agencies, foundations, and industries and commercial houses, are most welcome.

Malaysia takes pride in hosting RECSAM. It will give all the support within its means to the Regional Centre, as its contribution towards the successful development of science and mathematics education in South East Asia.

Thanks for the kind and thoughtful sentiments expressed by Lydon just as I also expression of continuing support to the Centre by U.S. Govt.

