

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID
Tajuk : MAJLIS MAKAN MALAM SEMPENA MESYUARAT ASIA EDIFACT BOARD KE
SEBELAS
Lokasi : HOTEL HILTON, KUALA LUMPUR
Tarikh : 01-11-1995

1. I would like to thank the Organizing Committee of the 11th Asia EDIFACT Board Meeting for giving me the honour of addressing tonight's dinner. This is the second time I have been given such an honour.

The first was on 6 Jun last year when I had also been given the privilege of addressing the dinner held in conjunction with the 8th Asia EDIFACT Board.

2. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the tireless efforts of the Asia EDIFACT Board in actively promoting the spread of education and awareness on EDI particularly on the development, promulgation and use of EDIFACT standards for its member countries.

3. The appeal of EDI is easy to understand. As a business strategy it offers improved customer service, lower inventory levels, and a quicker response to market demands. Moreover, it is much less expensive to send electronic documents from computer to computer than it is to physically send paper from company to company.

4. Two of the main goals for EDI when it was first implemented included the elimination, or at least reduction, of paper documents and the reduction of data entry tasks. Other uses evolved such as facilitating Just-In-Time (JIT) manufacturing and speeding up the turnaround time of orders. In replacing paper-based processing with computer-to-computer transmission of business documents, EDI reduces errors, shipping lead time, clerical processing time, mail transit time, and out-of-stock conditions at retail outlets.

5. I understand that existing paperwork processing is time consuming. For example, in an air cargo shipment involving shippers, forwarders, handling agents, airlines, customs, brokers and consignees, the actual time taken to fly the cargo account for only 10 percent of the time, whilst the remaining 90 percent is the time the cargo spent on the ground at some location while waiting for the paperwork to be completed. This is compounded by the fact that most of the paperwork are consequential, with the various parties having to wait for the previous steps to be completed before proceeding to the next action.

6. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my views on the the Malaysian Government's desire of establishing a paper-less civil service and how EDI can be effectively deployed to achieve this objective.

7. It is difficult to visualize office life without paper, now and in the future, particularly when government work is so much associated with paperwork. Hence, my notion of a paper-less civil service is one that uses less paper.

8. It is very clear that some of the contributing factors leading to problems related with the burden of paperwork are due to the existence of administrative procedures in government departments and laws which require those paperwork and coupled with the low penetration of information technology or IT in certain departments.

9. In order to alleviate the burden of paperwork in Government, I have always stressed on the need to rationalize governmental system and work procedures so as to reduce the use of papers and documents.

Archaic and circuitous procedures should be eliminated. If necessary, we have to amend some rules and regulations. We should evaluate on how new technologies such as work flow automation, imaging, electronic mail, EDI and others can greatly improve productivity, and reduce manual operations.

10. Last year during the ASEB Dinner, I have mentioned about some of the initiatives undertaken by the civil service to enhance the electronic delivery of Government information and services towards facilitating

electronic commerce. Amongst the projects undertaken are the Public Services Network, the Civil Service Link and the Government Integrated Telecommunications Network. The Government has agreed to implement the Government Integrated Telecommunications Network which is going to be a shared network for governmental use to support information infrastructure requirements for the public sector. I hope that the PSN, CSL and the GITN will develop, evolve and later converge into a comprehensive and cohesive infrastructure to support the provision of "on-stop non-stop" services to the public and as an enabler of electronic commerce in the future.

11. Several EDI projects are being carried out and are in various stages of implementation. Amongst these are the Port Kelang Community Sytem, the MITI Textile Export System, the MEDI*LINK system and many others.

12. On that note, I wish to again congratulate the Asia EDIFACT Board and the Malaysia EDIFACT Committee for their efforts in organising the 11th ASEB Meeting.