23rd CAFEO – "All ASEAN Engineers to Get Involved"

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Delegates from ASEAN Countries at the 23rd CAFEO

H.E. Asang Laoly, Deputy Prime Minister of Lao PDR conferred the AFEO Distinguished Honorary Fellowship to IEM President, Ir. Prof. Dr Ow Chee Sheng

The 23rd Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations (CAFEO) was successfully organised by Lao Union of Science and Engineering Associations (LUSEA) at the Don Chan Palace Hotel in Vientiane, Laos.

6 December 2005

"Laos – A land of millions elephants". This would be a long and exciting journey.

The IEM delegates were very excited as this is the first visit to Laos for most of us. In the morning, the delegates gathered at KLIA and departed for Bangkok. We have to transit at the Don Muang, Bangkok International Airport to catch the flight to Udon Thani, a town in north-east of Thailand bordering Laos. From Udon Thani, we traveled by land to Vientiane, Laos.

7 December 2005

The excitement began with tours in Vientiane. We visited the That Luang, one of the best known stupa in Laos and a National Symbol of Laos. We were also very impressed with other historic temples like Vat Phra Keo and Vat Sisaket. Vat Sisaket, the oldest monastery, standing intact in its original form, survived the destruction of the city by the Siamese in 1828. The Patuxay or Victory Gate of Vientiane is a huge structure resembling Arc de Triomphe of Paris.

8 December 2005 (Conference Day 1)

"All ASEAN engineers to get involved and contribute in the continuous economic growth of ASEAN", urged H.E. Asang Laoly, Deputy Prime Minister of Laos PDR, during his opening speech at the 23rd Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations (CAFEO) opening ceremony on 8 December 2005. It was held at Don Chan Palace Hotel in Vientiane, Laos. He added that "ASEAN engineers could help boost the region's integration with the global economy by making it an attractive destination for trade, investment and tourism." His speech was befitting to the 23rd CAFEO's theme, "Enhancing ASEAN Co-operation in Engineering for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development."

The opening ceremony was attended by more than 500 delegates from AFEO members' organisation which includes more than 40 delegates from The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM). Besides, the conference was also attended by members of engineering organisations from Australia, Canada, Korea, United States of America and Japan.

In the opening session, the conferring of AFEO Distinguished Honorary Fellowship and AFEO Honorary Members were held. IEM is very honoured to have our President, Ir. Prof. Dr Ow Chee Sheng to be conferred the AFEO Distinguished Honorary Fellowship. Six of the IEM members also received the AFEO Honorary Member award.

IEM delegates at the 23rd CAFEO

AFEO Governing Board meeting in progress

Group photo of AFEO Board members

After the opening ceremony, the Plenary Session Country Report was held. IEM's report was delivered by the President, Ir. Prof. Dr Ow Chee Sheng. He presented the activities organised by IEM and its achievements by IEM throughout the year of 2005.

In the afternoon session, the ASEAN Engineers Register Commission meeting was chaired by the AER Head Commissioner, Ir. Dr Gue See Sew (IEM). Status report was presented by Dr Gue and followed by status report presentation by respective Country Registrars.

The Young Engineer of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisation (YEAFEO) Board Meeting was also held in the afternoon. IEM was represented by the G&S Section. The YEAFEO board members presented their respective country report and discussed on multilateral co-operation.

Parallel Technical Paper Presentations were held throughout both days on 8 and 9 December 2005. More than 100 technical papers were presented during the conference related to the theme for the 23rd CAFEO Conference – "Enhancing ASEAN Co-operation in Engineering and Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development".

Finally after getting through all the formalities of the day, a Welcome Dinner was hosted by LUSEA. The dinner not only served the delegates with more local delicacies but also opportunity to mingle and network among delegates.

Day 2 – 9 December 2005 (Conference Day 2)

The AFEO Governing Board Meeting was held in the morning. Various matters pertaining to the operation and activities of AFEO were discussed. IEM also presented the theme for CAFEO-24: "Branding of ASEAN Professional Engineering Services and Education for Global Mobility" to be held in November/December 2006 in Kuala Lumpur.

This was followed by the closing ceremony and handover ceremony of AFEO flag by outgoing the AFEO Chairman, Prof. Khamphong Phanvongsa (LUSEA) to incoming AFEO Chairman, Ir. Prof. Dr Ow Chee Sheng (IEM).

In the evening, the Presentation of ASEAN Engineering Outstanding Awards was held. The recipient from Malaysia is MEI Consultants Sdn. Bhd., which successfully completed the project: Two Storey Biotechnology facilities and Office Building at ENSTEK Industrial Estate.

Two days of intense activities had brought all the ASEAN engineers closer together. Many friendships were built on this CAFEO foundation. All members were very enthusiastic to further enhance multilateral co-operation and share experience in engineering for the development of the region.

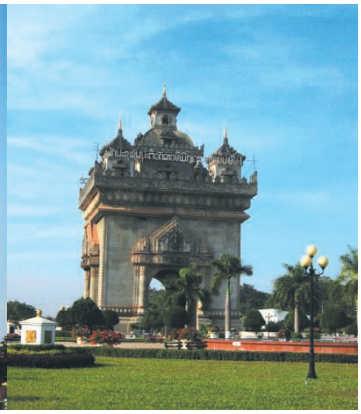
The 23rd CAFEO episode was closed with a great Farewell Dinner Party on the evening of 9 December 2005 at the Grand Ballroom of Don Chan Palace Hotel. All member countries were invited to perform on stage. There was a big roar and applause when the Malaysia's name was called upon to perform on stage. There was high expectation for Malaysia to stage a good performance.

Certainly, the G&S delegation entrusted by IEM did make a remarkable performance this year. A multimedia presentation on CAFEO and welcoming of the next CAFEO-24 in Malaysia has sent a clear signal that Malaysia will make the next CAFEO in Kuala Lumpur a great success. This was followed by a sketch and dance performance depicting the three main races in Malaysia, namely the Malays, Chinese and Indians.

The Malaysian delegation's friendliness and willingness to share experience has made a significant mark in this conference. This was indeed a memorable event for all IEM's delegates. IEM would like to congratulate LUSEA for organising such a great event and to thank Laos for their hospitality.

Malaysia and IEM welcome all our ASEAN friends to the 24th CAFEO to be held in Malaysia at the end of 2006. ■

National Symbol of Laos – The "That Luang"



Victory Monument, at Lane Xang Avenue, Vientiane