

Country Report

for

The 16th Annual General Assembly

Asia Pacific Book Publishers Association

Ulaanbaatar, MONGOLIA

2 - 5 July 2009

With notes added for the

ABPA EXCO Meeting in Manila

held on September 16, 2009

MALAYSIA

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(MABOPA)

Overview

The Malaysian Government continues to place huge emphasis on education for 2009. In fact, despite the economic downturn, the Malaysian Government has increased the spending on education to RM47.7 Billion or 23% of the 2009 Annual Budget. The Malaysian Governments' underlying commitment is to provide equal access to quality educational opportunities for all Malaysians, notwithstanding their geographical locations or income levels. The Malaysian Government views education as a very important agenda and this augurs very well for the book industry.

Malaysian Book Publishers Association (MABOPA) received good support from its members during the year. Membership has been growing steadily, from 80 plus members in 2005 to 165 today. During the year, 12 new members had joined the association which indicates that MABOPA is well accepted by the players in the rapidly expanding book industry in Malaysia.

The Executive Committee has been functioning very well over the past year and we have managed to achieve most of the goals we set. During the year, members of the Executive Committee have attended numerous industry related functions to make our presence felt. We have also organised several dialogues with the relevant government agencies for the benefits of our members. We also held an EGM to deliberate the revision of MABOPA Constitution, which was subsequently passed by the House at its 40th AGM on 28 April 2009.

In April 2009, we also successfully co-hosted the 2009 Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair (KLIBF) which has managed to draw 1.57 million visitors over ten days. In conjunction with the KLIBF, we co-organised the KLIBF Copyright Trade Centre and invited international trade buyers from Germany, Italy, Denmark, Australia and China to Kuala Lumpur to meet up with the local publishers.

Despite the economic downturn, the local publishing scene has been very vibrant during the year with more general titles published (See table below). There has also been a noticeable trend of increased spending on books by the public, especially on general titles, indicated by higher sales registered during the KLIBF. However, the educational publishers are being confronted by Government policies and have reported a drop in sales generally.

Statistics of Books Registered under the Library Depository Act, 1986

1997, 2004 – 2008						
SUBJECT	1997	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Generalities	128	206	203	1,672	171	207
Philosophy, Psychology	51	118	172	154	142	252
Religion	398	532	375	589	1,063	1,269

Sociology, Statistic	89	42	120	53	276	315
Politics, Economic	279	190	168	153	256	525
Law, Public Administration and Social Sciene	427	210	202	183	207	438
Military Art	3	50	4	4	27	73
Education	185	533	3,271	2,368	303	459
Trade, Communication, Transport, Tourism	51	35	119	114	130	97
Ethnography, Cultural Anthropology	82	63	61	134	66	509
Language, Linguistics	1,138	444	1,786	4,010	3,138	3,747
Mathematics	533	142	494	826	424	857
Natural Science	155	243	343	576	681	854
Public Health	119	42	86	152	147	444
Engineering Technology, Industries, Trade and Crafts	108	238	350	1,125	88	296
Agriculture, Forestry, Stockbreeding, Hunting, Fishing	134	36	87	65	50	264
Domestic Science	48	10	104	77	75	129
Management	112	135	382	135	362	680
Physical Planning, Town and Country Planning, Architecture	20	36	260	466	54	85
Plastic and Graphic Arts, Photography	69	30	99	75	112	351
Music, Performing Arts	47	18	64	55	48	52
Games and Sports	67	19	65	77	57	83
Literature	1,048	1,102	984	850	2,462	2,934
Geography	76	83	207	424	378	616
History, Biography	190	168	304	226	306	508
TOTAL	5,557	4,725	10,310	14,563	11,023	16,044
Text Book	1,553	1,183	3,863	5,493	2,325	4,366
Children	2,383	1,003	2,470	3,929	5,040	4,440
Adult	1,621	2,539	3,977	5,141	3,658	7,238
TOTAL	5,557	4,725	10,310	14,563	11,023	16,044
Government Publication	390	1,104	1,447	2,791	1,412	3,095
Non Government Publication	5,167	3,621	8,863	11,772	9,611	12,949
TOTAL	5,557	4,725	10,310	14,563	11,023	16,044
Books include monograph and other printed (non book) materials i.e. maps, posters and charts						

Activities and Events

1.0 International Publishers Association (IPA)

MABOPA has yet to apply to become a member of the IPA. We are still waiting for an indication on the quantum of annual fee for Malaysia before making a decision. On the whole, IPA has been very supportive and has shared with MABOPA important information and latest developments on the international front.

2.0 Asia-Pacific Publishers Association (APPA)

With sincere apologies, MABOPA is unable to attend the 2009 APPA AGM in Ulaanbaatar, MONGOLIA from 2 to 5 July 2009 due to time constraints. MABOPA's President, Mr. Law King Hui had attended a Sub-regional seminar on copyrights organised by WIPO from 24 to 27 June in Sri Lanka. During the week of the APPA AGM, Mr. Law is also required to attend meetings on National Book Policy being organised by the Malaysian Book Development Council (MBKM).

3.0 ASEAN Book Publishers Association (ABPA)

MABOPA has been very active regionally under the banner of ABPA. In the long run, MABOPA hopes to create a regional market for Malaysian IP. Also, Mr. Law will be taking over the Presidency of the ABPA for a two-year term from November 2009.

3.1 The 2008 ABPA Book Awards

MABOPA's member, E-Media Publication Sdn Bhd won a prestigious award at the 2008 ABPA Book Awards, announced in Singapore, for their illustrated children's book. The 2009 ABPA Book Awards winners will be announced in November 2009 at Jakarta. Submissions by MABOPA members must be done via the association no later than 30 September 2009.

3.2 Book Fairs Hosted by ABPA Member Countries

MABOPA attended almost all the book fairs in the region under the umbrella of ABPA. Apart from the Singapore Book Fair, book fairs in Indonesia, Brunei, Thailand and Vietnam were also attended by either the President and/or other EXCO members. Some ordinary members also attended these book fairs on their own.

4.0 Other International Book Fairs

MABOPA members also attended book fairs outside ASEAN such as those held in Bologna, Taipei, Hong Kong, Beijing, London and Frankfurt. MABOPA often encouraged its members to explore the international market for their products.

5.0 Public Awareness Campaign - Respect Copyright!

MABOPA is planning to invest in a public campaign to create awareness on copyright use. This public campaign will take the form of advertisements in the local newspapers, PR activities to instil respect for copyright, and publication of campaign materials for distribution at schools. We will also be seeking cooperation from government agency such as the IPO Malaysia (MyIPO) to co-sponsor our public campaign.

Government Relations

1.0 Ministry Of Education (MOE) - Text Book Division

During the year MABOPA was consulted by the MoE on the impact of petroleum price hikes on the prices of books. Subsequently, a study was conducted to determine if a price review of textbooks was justifiable. We were also consulted on the best approach for the compilation, publishing, printing and distribution of the literature component textbooks for schools. We also had consultations on the evaluation and procurement of reading materials for school libraries and the resource centres. MABOPA also took initiative to enquire about the impending new school curriculum and the ensuing textbooks publishing programme.

2.0 National Book Development Council (MBKM)

Apart from co-hosting the 2009 KLIBF with the MBKM, MABOPA is also set to play a leading role to revive the National Book Awards this year. The award, under the auspices of the MBKM, will be treated as a high profile event to attract

public attention, both locally and from abroad. Besides that, MABOPA will also participate actively in a series of meetings and discussion being organised by the Council to revise the Malaysia National Book Policy.

3.0 Others

MABOPA also had dialogues and meetings with agencies of several other ministries to discuss matter related to the development of the local book industry. The agencies consulted included the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), the Enforcement Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs (KDN), the Ministry of Information, Communication & Culture (MICC) and the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs.

Conferences, Seminars & Professional Training

1.0 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Asia-Pacific Sub-Regional Seminar on Access to and Management of Copyrighted Works in the Digital Environment

The WIPO seminar in Colombo, Sri Lanka was very technical and consisted of mainly updates of the current initiatives. The seminar, from 25 to 27 June 2009 was participated by about 50 participants. Fifteen (15) foreign participants were invited from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea and Thailand, apart from the host country Sri Lanka. All the participants were senior officials of the respective national copyright agencies and representatives from the respective national publishing sectors.

2.0 Stakeholders' Forum at the 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (17CCEM) in Kuala Lumpur

Mr. Law King Hui chaired a session at the 17CCEM Stakeholders' Forum in Kuala Lumpur from 15 to 19 June 2009. The session chaired by Mr. Law was under Sub-Theme 4 entitled Realising the Potential of Non-State Actors. Six issues and seven recommendations derived from the session were drafted into the Stakeholders' Forum Statement for the Ministers. The main theme of the 17CCEM was Making Connections and Building Partnerships: Towards and Beyond Global Education Goals and Targets.

3.0 Seminar on The Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984

The above seminar was held on 8 January 2009 as part of an on-going campaign by MAPOBA to raise members' awareness of laws and regulations concerning the control of publication of materials in the country. The speaker was a senior official from the Ministry of Home Affairs. The speaker gave an overview of the acts governing publications and importation of publications into the country, types of offences under the various governing acts and the role of the Ministry in enforcing the law.

4.0 Workshop on Copyright Industries in Malaysia: Performance and Prospects

The above workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur on 28 August 2008. It was organised by the Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO) in collaboration with WIPO. MyIPO, assisted by WIPO and local researchers, is

conducting a research on the contribution of the copyright-based industries to the nation's economy. Representatives from the various copyright-based industries were called upon to give input and information about the industries they represent. Ultimately, MyIPO hopes to be able to quantify the copyright-based industries contributions to the national gross domestic product (GDP) index. Similar efforts have been taken by many other developed countries in the world.

The book publishing industry was represented by Mr Law King Hui and the Deputy President, Madam Zainora Muhamad. Mr. Law gave useful industry insights, perspectives and inputs from a practitioner's point of view to participants of the workshop.

5.0 Asia Pacific Conference on Children's Book Publishing 2008

The above international conference was held at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) from 1-3 July 2008 under the auspices of the Malaysian Board of Books for Young People (MBBY). MABOPA's Deputy President, Madam Zainora Muhamad was enlisted to conduct one of the workshops during the conference, i.e. a workshop on Marketing of Children's Books. Many MABOPA members participated in the conference and workshops, all with subsidies from MABOPA.

Additional notes for the ABPA Executive Committee Meeting held in Manila on September 16, 2009

1.0 Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair (KLIBF) 2010

The KLIBF 2010 will take place from 19 to 28 March 2010 at the same venue, PWTC. The fair will be larger than 2009 by about 25%, bringing the total number of booths available for sale to about 800.

2.0 Kuala Lumpur International Trade Fair (KLITF) 2010

For the first time, the organiser of the KLIBF will also host a trade fair from 22 to 26 March in conjunction with the KLIBF. A special hall will be assigned for the trade exhibitors.

3.0 Kuala Lumpur Book City (Kota Buku Kuala Lumpur – KBKL)

The Deputy Prime Minister, who is also the Education Minister of Malaysia, has approved a special grant of RM20 million for the purpose of refurbishing a heritage building which will then be used as the “cornerstone” of the Kuala Lumpur Book City project mooted by the industry. The Project will be managed by the Malaysian National Book Council (MBKM). Currently the building houses a primary school which will be relocated.

4.0 Book Prices in Malaysia

It has often been quoted by politicians in speeches that book prices are too high in Malaysia and it was thought that this is one of the main reasons why it is difficult to establish the reading habit in our society. MABOPA has managed to prove to the contrary and convinced the Book Industry Special Task Force (set up by the lawmakers) that book prices in Malaysia are indeed reasonable. The biggest cost component (as much as 40%) of the book manufacturing is the cost of paper and by explaining that this commodity is being sold to publishers around the world at the same price, it is not difficult to prove that books are much more expensive in Europe or the US. The main culprits of the myth that books are expensive in Malaysia are the purchasing power and the economies of scale.

5.0 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (17CCEM)

The panel session of the CCEM Stakeholders' Forum chaired by MABOPA President was to explore, among others, the following issues:

- The role of publishers in advancing education in the Commonwealth in a context of rapid technological change.
- Look at the role played and the challenges faced by traditional publishers, including in the Commonwealth's many small states.
- The impact of and opportunities created by new trends such as digital publishing, technology-based distance and open learning and the development of virtual knowledge repositories.
- To explore how these are connected and how those connections can best be harnessed and furthered to advance education in the Commonwealth.
- The importance of partnerships in addressing technological changes.

The three speakers in this panel were:

- Ian Randle (Caribbean Publishers Education)
- Dr Emma Kruse –Vaai (University of Samoa)
- Mr Dugie Cameron (Pearson Education, Asia)

6.0 Book Awards

Apart from the National Book Awards under the auspices of MBKM, another book award, the *Anugerah Buku Negara*, under the auspices of *Yayasan Buku Negara*, a charitable foundation, will also be awarded this year. Both the awards are expected to be handed out before the end of 2009.

7.0 Training and Seminar

Apart from the already mentioned seminars and workshops, MABOPA also organised a seminar entitled “Understanding the Types & Uses of Paper and Boards” for members on July 9, 2009. The speaker was a consultant from the pulp, paper & board industry who is also a fellow of the Institute of Printing (UK), Malaysia branch.

8.0 MABOPA’s Own Premises

MABOPA has purchased an office lot with an area of approximately 160 square metres located in Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. The office is expected to be ready for occupation by the end of 2009.

9.0 Membership

Membership of the association is 171 as of September 15, 2009.