

FOREWORD

As I am writing this foreword, the world is depending on the Internet in this Covid-19 age. It is likely that this will change the worldwide culture and push us further into a Cyber Civilization. With this maturing of the Internet, we are in danger of losing track of the history as told by the people who were there and took a significant part in its creation. While there have been attempts to document this very important past, this is the first attempt to do so in the area of the world where the Internet has had an extremely significant impact -- Asia.

In the early days of the Internet, there was a USA focus with a few interconnects with Asia and Europe. One of the early actions to extend the coverage was based in the academic world. Networks such as BITNET and CSNET, while mainly USA based, understood the benefits to science and other academic pursuits if the participants could electronically interact with their colleagues in the rest of the world.

One of the early attempts to extend the reach of the Internet to Asia was via the "Johnny Appleseed" approach. It is 41 years ago in October 1985 a set of people responded to queries by people in Asian countries asking how they could connect with the growing Internet by offering to supply magnetic tapes to people in the requesting countries, often by physically going with the tapes containing software to connect to CSNET as well as providing access points to the USA Internet. The people that we, I was one of the seeders, worked with became the leaders in their nation and founded

the initial national networks that blossomed with time and often formed the basis of commercial Internets.

The traditions that these network frontier pioneers established lead to the eventual spread of the benefits of Internet access to not only their nations but became models for the spread to the rest of Asia. With this spread came dramatic changes to how people interacted with each other that benefited the people and their nations.

It is an honor to be asked to write this foreword in that it not only documents to the growth of the Internet in this area of the world but also honors those who drove it to success.

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