

HOME NEWS

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ANC seeks expertise to set up its own newspaper

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The African National Congress (ANC) is in the process of setting up its own newspaper as part of its preparations to face South Africa's first all-race national election next April, the first of its kind in 350 years.

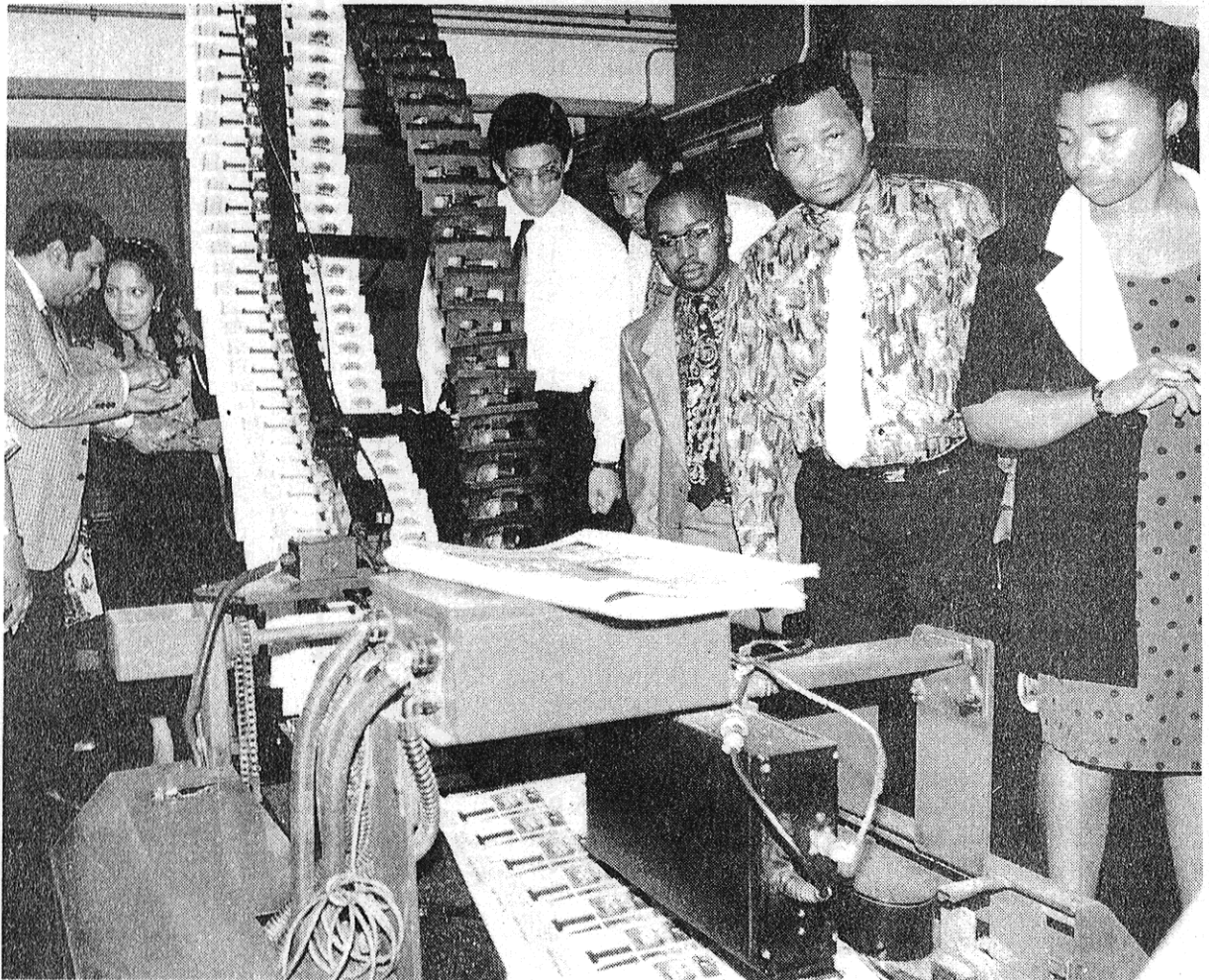
Its chief representative in Washington, Lindiwe Mabuzza, who is now attending a course in Malaysia, said having a newspaper of its own was important for the ANC since all newspapers in South Africa were owned by the whites.

"We (the ANC) have no way of reaching the South African public since all South African newspapers are in the hands of the other side," she said during a dialogue with New Straits Times Sdn Bhd group editor A. Kadir Jasin at the Balai Berita, here, yesterday.

Mabuzza is among 20 ANC officials attending a course at the Institute of International Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IIDFR), who toured the printing presses at Balai Berita to gain an insight into newspaper production.

They were briefed on the processes involved by production general manager S. Durai Raj and group general manager of research and corporate communications P.C. Shivadas.

During the dialogue, Kadir expressed his readiness to offer the expertise available at the New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad to help in the training of journalists and newspaper production personnel for the ANC newspaper.



HOT OFF THE PRESS... The ANC delegation just in time to see an edition of the Malay Mail roll out.

Mabuzza said the gesture was a great encouragement to the party which had assigned a representative to Europe to study newspaper organisations there.

"After seeing NSTP's facilities, I think it will be more inspiring and practical for us to learn the shortcuts from you rather than looking at newspapers in the West."

Speaking to reporters later, Mabuzza said South Africa was akin to Malaysia in many ways, especially in terms of the diversity of its people and the historical

links to the British.

However, she said, the "divide and rule" legacy South Africa inherited from the British was further complicated by the racist apartheid policy.

"We are looking very closely at how Malaysia has resolved its racial problems through affirmative action in the form of developing the economy. It is very important that political democracy is complemented by economic democracy, otherwise political liberation will be incomplete," she said.

Meanwhile, Kadir told the group that the struggle against apartheid in South Africa had always been in Malaysia's foreign policy agenda.

"Malaysians are very much aware about is happening in South Africa and the issue is covered extensively by newspapers of all languages in Malaysia," he said.

Also present at the dialogue were NSTSB senior associate editor Zainon Ahmad and IIDFR senior programme co-ordinator Rohani Musa.

Among those who aired their views at the session was Ellen Molekani, who said that she was pleasantly surprised to find that a Third World country such as Malaysia had undergone rapid development with the people still retaining their culture, values and warmth.

Team member Cassim Peer said that apart from the Muslims, most South Africans knew very little about Malaysia and the little they knew about the country was gathered through travel advertisements.