

**WELCOMING ADDRESS BY HIS. HON MINISTER OF WORKS IN HONOUR OF  
VISIT BY HIS EXCELLENCY KAMAL NATH  
THE MINISTER FOR ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS INDIA  
ON  
4<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2010  
8.30 PM  
SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR**

Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First of all allow me to extend a warm welcome to Your Excellency and members of your delegation and to thank Your Excellency for accepting my invitation to be here. We feel very honoured and privileged that Your Excellency has decided to make Malaysia as Your Excellency's first visit outside India for 2010 and this reflects the warm relationships between our two countries. I sincerely hope that your stay, though brief, will afford you the opportunity to observe the progress and development that is taking place in Malaysia particularly in the field of highway management and development.

2. This visit reflects Your Excellency's utmost support to strengthen and further develop cooperation between Malaysia and India particularly in the planning and development of highways and roads. We already have strong collaboration in the area of infrastructure development especially highways and public utilities but I feel that there is still much room for expansion. I am confident that your timely visit will provide the impetus for further enhancement of the cooperation, particularly in the construction sector, between our two countries.

3. I still remember the fruitful discussions that we had when I visited India in December 2009 and the generous hospitality that you accorded

to me and my delegation during our stay in New Delhi. We hope to reciprocate that kindness as much as we can during Your Excellency's stay in Kuala Lumpur this time.

4. Tonight we have specially brought together the captains of the Malaysian construction industry, both from the public and private sectors consisting of highway concessionaires, major contractors and consultants, to meet and engage with Your Excellency. We have in the audience key players; some of whom have already actively engaged in infrastructure development in India while others are looking forward to establish and renew their business interests in India.

Your Excellency,

5. On the national level, Malaysia's development approach has been premised on close public-private sector collaboration and partnership. The private sector is viewed as the engine of growth, while the government provides active support and direction. Regular meetings and constant dialogues between the public and private sectors have created a harmonious environment that foster growth and enterprise. In the next 10 years leading up to Vision 2020, Malaysia would have to deal with the dynamic changes in the global environment, while improving and upgrading the country's infrastructure needs via the construction sector. Malaysia and India have long been partners in progress and development in a number of areas. The cultural and family ties go back much longer than the commercial and business ties that bind the countries together. The ethnic and religious diversity in the two countries enable both to appreciate the need for tolerance, mutual respect and cooperation.

Your Excellency,

6. In pursuing this relationship further, Malaysia has put forward a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be signed by the Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia and the National Highway Authority India, representing both governments. It is my earnest hope that the signing of this MOU can take place in the near future.

7. This signing would definitely serve as a platform to strengthen, promote and develop cooperation in relation to the provision of technical assistance services on highway management and development. It is my hope that the proposed MOU will be a testimony of our cooperation and participation in the development of the highways in India.

Your Excellency,

8. To accelerate its economic development, I have been made to understand that India has embarked on a very comprehensive and ambitious road infrastructure program. Through the conviction and the commitment of your leaders, the progress towards realizing this plan has been impressive and remarkable. Malaysia experienced remarkable economic growth in the 90s following the development of our highway network and I believe India's current vibrant economy will be further spurred by India's ambitious road infrastructure program.

9. Malaysia is indeed very proud to contribute and be part of the development of India and we will definitely look forward to continuing our cooperation and assistance in helping India attain its infrastructure goals. In terms of roads, highways and bridges, Malaysian construction companies have completed 40 projects in the tune of RM 6.02 billion

(USD 1.72 billion) and are currently implementing 9 projects at the total value of RM 1.05 billion (USD 300 million), making the total value of RM 7.07 billion (USD 2.02 billion) for roads infrastructure projects in India.

10. Through smart partnerships and various means of technology transfer, the ventures made by the Malaysian construction companies during the last few years have produced a large number of Indian construction companies possessing the capability of undertaking challenging highway projects.

11. In this relation, we are very keen to enhance the cooperation between players from both countries and to undertake projects together for mutual benefit. This will indeed go a long way in strengthening our relationship. Synergistic partnerships between both countries with complementary capabilities will benefit both sides through the sharing of knowledge, experience, skills and technology.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Your Excellency has had a hectic program immediately after arriving from India this morning, and to be followed by an equally busy schedule tomorrow. Therefore I will keep my address brief. Let me conclude by wishing Your Excellency and the members of the delegation a very pleasant stay in Kuala Lumpur and I hope the business engagements planned during your stay will provide meaningful outcomes for our mutual benefit. On that note, please enjoy the dinner and have a pleasant evening ahead.

Thank You.