

**Teks Ucapan Menteri Kerja Raya
Majlis Perasmian dan Makan Malam
Seminar on Tunnels and Underground Structures**

2 September 2014 (Selasa)

8.00 malam

Bilik Mahkota III, Aras Ballroom, Hotel Istana, Kuala Lumpur

Y.Bhg. Dato' Zohari Bin Hj Akob
Ketua Setiausaha Kementerian Kerja Raya

Y.Bhg. Dato' Ir. Haji Annies bin Md Ariff
Ketua Pengarah Kerja Raya

Y. Bhg. Datuk Ir. Hj. Adanan Bin Mohamed Hussain
Timbalan Ketua Pengarah Kerja Raya (Sektor Bisnes)

Y.Bhg. Dato' Sr. Hj. Abdull Manaf bin Hj. Hashim
Timbalan Ketua Pengarah Kerja Raya (Sektor Pakar)

Ir. Zulkifli Bin Ahmad, Yang DiPertua ProJKRM

Ir. Hj. Hashim Bin Buyu, Pengerusi, Seminar, Merangkap
Setiausaha Agung ProJKRM dan

Distinguished Guests, Academics, Ladies And Gentlemen
Assalamualaikum, Salam Sejahtera dan Salam 1 Malaysia and
very good evening to all of you.

1. It is indeed a great pleasure to officiate and to participate in tonight's dinner that celebrates the coming together of the best minds in the tunneling technology that seeks out to chart a pathway for the acquiring and the adoption of the sciences involved, and the strengthening of our collective capacity in making tunnel technology an integral part of our work register. In this context, allow me to congratulate the **Association of Professionals of PWD Malaysia (ProJKRM)** and the **Public**

Works Department for organizing this seminar entitled, “**Towards Sustainable Space Development**”, which I believe, comes at the most opportune time.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. The rapid development of Malaysia, with its vibrant economy and the excellent infrastructural achievements, calls for the exploration of various other alternatives for a sustainable growth of the country. In this context, tunneling has a relatively short history in Malaysia. The British had done tunnels for rail transport, and thereafter there were a few road tunnels at intersections and bottlenecks. To recall tunnel works of significance that can be mentioned here are, the **LRT tunnels stretching some 4.4 km** having 5 underground stations where 60 percent of it, I am told, **is under the Klang River**; the **New Bukit Berapit tunnels** for the railways; and the **Stormwater Management And Road Tunnel** (also known as the **SMART** tunnel) that was completed in 2007.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. To the list mentioned, there are other tunnels, some, like the water tunnel in Negeri Sembilan, is now completed and ready for operation, while others, in different stages work progress and implementation, like the **MRT rail transit tunnels**, **railway tunnels in Perak** and **water transport tunnels in Pahang**. Tunneling technology is fast becoming part and parcel of our environment and it is here to stay.

4. In other words, with more exposure, experience and coupled with the new success stories in constructing tunnel, as an example our very own SMART tunnel, which has paid itself off in terms of its cost and avoided damages whenever heavy rains brought in flash floods in Kuala Lumpur. With that best of experience, it certainly calls for us to migrate to usage more of tunneling in our country's construction industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen

5. As the many stacked up elevated highways that we build to harmonize traffic flow, there comes a time when we have to look for alternatives. Stacked up highways are eyesores. And so far we have done enough damage to our beautiful hills, mountain ranges and environment by cutting through them and chopping them apart. The Public Works Department informs me that the maintenance cost of the Simpang Pulai - Cameron Highlands road slope continues to escalate yearly. And for the last 5 years the Government has spent a total amount of RM470 million for the maintenance of slopes throughout the country. Tunneling, probably, needs to be seen as an alternative to solve these problems.

6. Another aspect that needs to be borne in mind always is that we are all binded by the limitation of space. The world population now is 7.2 billion, with 50 percent of them living in cities. That is to say that space is getting scarce, where modern and smart cities, are digging deep to provide underground transportation, office

space and other facilities. The economics involved shows that it is efficient, cost effective and above all it is Green.

Ladies and Gentlemen

7. Underground space development can free up more real estate for the wealth creation of the nation. In Kuala Lumpur we are beginning to feel the squeeze for space and probably the future would be to think of a similar New York BIG DIG, 14 stories below ground level, to support the population and its economic activities.

8. In a nutshell, what I am saying is that, the local engineering fraternity and contractors should seize the opportunity to arm themselves with the technology that is required. And I make this call to the tertiary educational institutions, especially the universities, to include in their syllabus tunnel technology and encourage students to pursue courses in tunneling works. Our students should in fact by now be attached to some of the projects that I mentioned earlier to gain hands-on experience.

9. Above all, JKR as consultant to the Government should prioritize and make a concerted effort to strengthen its Geotechnical department with the right personnel and further develop the core competencies in the sciences to accordingly advise the government on this matter.

10. Last but not least, I would like to extend a warm welcome, and wish “Selamat Datang” to our friends from abroad. I hope you

will have fond memories of your stay here in Malaysia. On that note, in the name of ALLAH the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful, I am pleased to officiate this *Seminar on Sustainable Underground Space Development* and wish you all every success in your deliberations.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

And with that I declare this Seminar opened.

وبالله التوفيق والهداية والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

YB Datuk Hj. Fadillah bin Hj. Yusof
Minister of Works, Malaysia