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**THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, MALAYSIA**
Bangunan Ingenieur, Lots 60 & 62, Jalan 52/4, P.O. Box 223,
(Jalan Sultan) 46720 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Tel: 03-7968 4001/4002 Fax: 03-7957 7678
E-mail: sec@iem.org.my Homepage: http://www.iem.org.my

# "What a Waste"

***By: Engr. Mah Soo,*** *F.I.E.M., P.Eng.*

'To waste' could be defined as 'to use, consume or expend thoughtlessly, carelessly or to no avail'. The word or the entire expression of the title could mean differently to different people, depending on the tone, time or place it is being said. Some such examples are given as food for thought to all professionals to find ways in solving them as a service to the nation.

Single occupancy of vehicles is a waste of fuel and a bad utilisation of assets as well as a bad option of commuting especially in the city. Could there be any better means of travelling to stop such wastages?

Fines for traffic offences have always been there and a common standardised classification has recently been agreed upon with the hope in reducing corruption and the number of accidents. Could these reduce the wasteful loss of human lives and property towards the target of zero fatalities by the year 2020?

Many of us know that it is dangerous to venture out in the open during bad weather. Many incidents at air, sea and land have happened during bad weather with unnecessary wastage of irreplaceable human capital and other equipment replacement costs. Could these be avoided if common sense, duty of care and safety consciousness have prevailed?

Flash floods have somehow been accepted by our society to be inevitable, but the recent extensive flooding in Johore, Pahang, Melaka and Negri Sembilan was categorised as unexpected distinct from the expected, though unnecessary, annual occurrences in the east coast states. The flood has cost the government to the tune of RM 1.5 billion which does not include losses suffered by businesses and individuals. Though the financial and moral support by the government and others provided some consolation in helping the victims to overcome their traumatic experience, this huge sum could definitely be put to better use in the development of our country.

The concern of changes in attitudes towards our society, environment and the global climate has been publicised with many policies being formulated for implementation. Many a time there seemed to be different and wrong signals being sent to the rakyat on issues such as racial integration, project failures and curbing pollution at source. "Such problems must be resolved fast or else they will become bigger problems" said our Prime Minister. Hence the leaders of today have to identify the real root cause and take timely and result-oriented actions to nip it in the bud to ensure our past 50 years' of effort would not go wasted?

Finally, it would be the most wasteful of all if we do not learn from our past experiences and mistakes but instead, repeat them time and again! ■