

Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) Geotechnical Division Technical Visit to Malaysia

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FROM 27 to 31 October 2008, the Geotechnical Engineering Technical Division (GETD) hosted delegates from the HKIE Geotechnical Division during their technical visit to Malaysia. A total of 30 engineers led by the HKIE Geotechnical Division Chairman, Engr. Prof. Tham Leslie George from the University of Hong Kong arrived in Kuala Lumpur on 27 October 2008 and was greeted by the GETD chairman, Engr. Yee Yew Weng.

The visit by the HKIE Geotechnical Division aims to foster and maintain the close relationship between the Geotechnical Division of HKIE and IEM, and to also exchange knowledge and experience in geotechnical works. As such, a wide range of visits were arranged which included Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Slope Engineering Branch of Public Works Department (PWD), various construction sites and a visit to a consultancy office in Kuala Lumpur.

VISIT TO UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

The delegates were welcomed by Engr. Assoc. Prof. Dr Bujang bin Kim Huat and Engr. Assoc. Prof. Dr Mohd. Saleh bin Jaafar, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, UPM. A presentation on academic programs and R&D in UPM was given by Engr. Assoc. Prof. Dr Mohd Saleh, while Dr. Bujang and his colleagues presented an overview on landslide/slope problems in Malaysia and various R&D works related to slopes carried out by UPM. A lively exchange of opinions between the delegates and the researchers from UPM followed after the presentation. Future collaborations between the researchers from Hong Kong and Malaysia are envisaged in order to improve our understanding on landslides/slope problems.

VISIT TO SLOPE ENGINEERING BRANCH OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Y. Bhg. Dato' Engr. Dr Ashaari bin Mohamad, Director of the Slope Engineering Branch, and his team of engineers presented to the delegates the function and responsibility of the Slope Engineering Branch, which is modelled closely after the Hong Kong's Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO). Some of the objectives of the Slope Engineering Branch are to:

- Formulate proactive (not crisis-driven) slope safety and management policy
- Develop slope safety and management system
- Set criteria defining the levels of 'unacceptable' and 'broadly acceptable' risks
- Increase safety standards for slopes



Presentation of token of appreciation to Engr. Assoc. Prof. Dr Mohd Saleh bin Jaafar, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, UPM by Engr. Prof. Tham Leslie George, HKIE Geotechnical Division Chairman



HKIE delegates together with engineers from the Slope Engineering Branch, PWD

- Increase public awareness on slope hazards
- To be the international centre of reference in slope engineering for tropical climate countries

VISIT TO CONSTRUCTION SITES

During the technical visit, the delegates visited the following construction sites:

- Platinum Park at the KLCC area where the foundation and deep excavation work is in progress.
- Electrified Double Track (EDT) project site including bored piling, stone column and viaduct works.
- Penang Times Square site for basement excavation in soft clay.

The Platinum Park construction works consist of diaphragm wall and bored piling works on soft ground overlying limestone formation and was presented by Engr. Liew Shaw Shong. Engr. Dr Ooi Lean Hock and representatives from Gamuda Bhd hosted the delegates during their visit to the EDT project site and witnessed various construction works such as stone columns (wet process) and land viaduct construction.



Discussion at the Platinum Park during site visit



HKIE delegates at the EDT project site



HKIE delegates at the Penang Times Square site office



HKIE delegates at Victoria Bridge

The visit to the EDT project site started from the Sg. Siput site office and the delegates travelled north towards Penang. On the way, the delegates also visited the Victoria Bridge which was constructed a century ago but is now abandoned. The HKIE delegates then made a stop at Penang Island and visited the Penang Times Square to see basement excavation in soft clay and the use of recharge well to control the groundwater level during excavation works.

VISIT TO CONSULTANCY OFFICE

G&P Geotechnics Sdn Bhd hosted the delegates and presented a general overview on consultancy works undertaken by a typical consultancy firm in Malaysia. A lively exchange of opinions and sharing of experience between Malaysia and Hong Kong's practices in consultancy works took place after the presentation.

Delegates from Hong Kong highlighted the stringent requirements for site supervision especially for geotechnical works practiced in Hong Kong. For example, the HK GEO requires a qualified full-time site supervisor for geotechnical works related to slope/retaining wall and regular inspections shall also be carried out by a more senior qualified engineer depending on the nature of the works.

In summary, the visit by the HKIE Geotechnical Division has further enhanced the good relationship between the geotechnical engineers of both countries. This will be beneficial for both countries as the experience shared and



Committee members of the HKIE Geotechnical Division and the IEM Geotechnical Engineering Technical Division

networking made will ensure future collaborations and the sharing of technical expertise. Subsequent to the visit, the HKIE had invited IEM to participate in a joint seminar on geotechnical works which will be held in Hong Kong in 2009.

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