

New Editor's Message: 'To Be'

By: **Engr. Dr Ramlee bin Karim**, *Bulletin Editor*

Personally the theme for this issue is ever so nostalgic and brings back so much memories for me. It is still vivid in my mind the moment when Tenaga Satu set sail for Japan with a full load of LNG on 28 January 1983 JIT to fulfil the Supply Contract. While the Big Shots then flew to Tokyo to receive the carrier, the Small Shots like me were left behind wrecking their nerves to look after a still-unstable plant.

Then there was the implementation of the First Phase of the Peninsular Gas Utilization Project which included the supply of Sales Gas to Perwaja Steel Mill with a problem of too high a calorific value. There was also the 'then on then off' readiness of Paka Power Station to receive first gas, the ceremonious sending away of the first LPG export to Japan, and the distribution of piped Sales Gas to selected Petronas Housing. We needed to pay only RM 4 per month being the minimum bill per household which very seldom was exceeded especially by those on bachelor status in Kertih. And I had the dubious honour of receiving the very first bill for reticulated Sales Gas. I also had the honour of using the first Proton Saga on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG).

Those were more than twenty years ago. There has been so much progress in the Malaysian Oil and Gas industry. There were then only three LNG modules, now the capacity have more than tripled, and instead of being limited to Tokyo Gas and Tokyo Electric for export then, we are now venturing into South Korea and Taiwan as well.. The extent of the Gas 'Grid' was to Paka to the North and Kemaman to the South, and the Asean Gas Grid which is now being implemented was only a topic for discussion then. And now we have queues of taxis and other public transport vehicles waiting at Mother and Daughter stations to fill up with CNG. But the fundamental question still remains, 'To Burn or not To Burn'. Back then we were talking about seventy years and even a hundred years of gas reserves based on the then expected usage. But

the emphasis on the usage of gas has seen dramatic reserve depletion rates, so much so that even with new findings and supplementary supplies from our neighbours, we are feeling nervous about the remaining reserves. It has become of paramount importance that the utilization of Natural Gas as a fuel and as petrochemical feedstock needs continually be optimized and balanced for overall long-term benefits.

I have been a dedicated follower and reader of Jurutera for several years. In fact, I have been contributing editorials as well as articles since many years ago, but I have never really been close enough to experience the nitty-gritty of its actual production. My involvement have this far been as a member of the Standing Committee looking at the regular monthly reports. As Bulletin Editor you may say that I am a new Chap on the Block; maybe a Chip of the old Block; and perhaps a new head for a Chop on the Block.

Due to a Death in the Family I have been unable to attend several IEM Committee and Sub-Committee meetings lately and this included the first meeting of the session for the Standing Committee on Information and Publication where a proposal was made that I be appointed as the Bulletin Editor. So first question is 'To be or not to be'. I have decided 'To Be' since I have indicated to the Chairman of the Standing Committee earlier that I am willing to be more active. Now I am finding it as nerve-wrecking as looking after an LNG plant with its explosive potential. First thing on the plate was the June 2007 Issue of Jurutera which needed immediate and urgent attention. In this respect, my job has been made very easy mainly because of four groups of people whose efforts are most appreciated. First the Oil and Gas and Mining Technical Division (OGMTD) who have gathered and assisted in reviewing more than enough materials for the June Issue so much so that a couple or so may have to be KIVed for a later issue. Second is the immediate past Bulletin Editor and his

Committee members who keep on giving their valuable untiring service to assist and guide me. Third there is Dimension whose staff are trying their best during very difficult times; and last but not least the Secretariat staff with their patience to give the necessary support.

It is somewhat surprising to hear after a somewhat positive findings on the responses from the last Readership Survey that there are concerns voiced regarding the alledged deterioration of the quality of IEM's publications which have necessitated the intervention of Excomm in the form of procedural improvements in the publication process by involving the Technical Divisions in the review process. This is definitely a good and positive move for the purpose of checking the technical soundness of the contents of the articles contributed by members and others. But basically, what we need are good quality contributions to produce good quality Jurutera. Currently, we do not have this luxury. Maybe it is the question of whether 'To Be Chicken or To Be Egg'- quality publications attract quality contributions. I would imagine that one would rather be a Quality Egg, be hatched and grow to be a Quality Chicken and contribute Quality Eggs than be a Rotten Egg or a Noisy Chicken. One article per Council Member per year to start with is adequate to fill up the Feature pages of the Jurutera. But, of course, to Chicken Out is a much easier option.

Despite all the difficulties and constraints the monthly bulletin has been produced every month without fail. I wish to congratulate and thank all those who have contributed their efforts and time towards the successful publication of Jurutera in the past, and I am making an appeal that they continue the good work into the future. An adaptation of a classic pantun:

*Little jackfruit, is the fence over
Bring me a pole for me to collect
Kid on the Block, is new to discover
Many mistakes for you to correct*

Thank you.