REACHING FOR GREATER HEIGHTS

No venture, no gain

By: Ir. Prof. Abang Abdullah bin Abang Ali, IEM President

After attending a number of activities organised by other organisations, I have come to the conclusion that IEM activities are amongst the best. Our annual dinners are high class, our conferences or congresses world class, and our publications scientifically and professionally of high standard. IEM has a good Vision laid out in the Strategic Plan. In this knowledge age, we have drafted a Position Paper on Research and Development and we have completed three studies on Engineering Formation and Education and another on Infrastructure Development. Excomm a few years back had agreed to set aside some balance from WEC99 to undertake a foresight study to assist engineering researchers in the country to identify their research direction and niches. And we have an established training center to support flexible and lifelong learning.

We have all the ingredients of a successful learned society provided we are prepared to maintain and where necessary double our efforts and at the same time work hard to rectify any shortcomings. Yes, I had been shaking up the institution with my comments especially in this corner, but not with any ill intention or intention to witch hunt, but to awaken and brighten us up. Any organisation would need a bit of spring cleaning now and then, just as an old house needs a fresh coat of paint or an old car needs some overhauling to make it run better.

And we are getting responses from members who have not shown interest in IEM before. Over one wedding reception, I bumped into a member who happily remarked, *"Hey Mr President, your address was very good"* and another said our dinner was excellent. And true to our role as a learned society, the IEM President has been invited to give a large number of Keynote Addresses and talks to various organisations. I was even invited to give a talk on Globalisation to a gathering of the country's top brass (army, navy and air force generals) at Awana recently. IEM is now regularly consulted by the media and we are now appearing on TV and radio shows. This is the higher benchmark that we have set.

I am not trying to blow our own trumpet but trying to share the fruits of our labour from our various initiatives to bring IEM to greater heights. IEM has the potential to become the premier engineering organisation that we yearn for and more members are coming forward to lend us a hand.

Relations with the Board of Engineers, Malaysia (BEM) is at its best now. The President of BEM has been very nice to us by suspending the BEM PAE to make all engineers sit for the IEM Professional Interview before registering as a PEng with the Board to, in his own words, *"Make more engineers join IEM."* And as if that is not enough, he has also given the CPD to IEM to run. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Tan Sri Zaini for this important gesture.

Yes, IEM is on the way to greater heights. I would invite members as well as would-be members to share these good times when IEM is on the rise. ■

Wishing all IEM Members & Readers