

THE BIRTH OF IEM

THE story of The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) began with our nation's independence. The Institution, born exactly 20 months after Merdeka on 1 May 1959, has had a marked influence on the engineering profession in the country. It was indeed a herculean task in those days to set up an association as the British Officers were still firmly on the saddle even after our nation had achieved its independence. It was an impressive feat to get in the wedge to open the way for the establishment of a local institution.

The Institution's prime mover and founder President, Allahyarham Tan Sri Ir. (Dr) Haji Yusoff Haji Ibrahim, first had the idea of forming a local Institution when he was the State PWD Engineer in Kelantan in 1957. *"As we were attaining Merdeka soon, I thought it was the right time to form an Institution of our own to reflect our independence professionally"*. He managed to gather a few engineers who were interested in forming a local institution when he was transferred to the Kuala Lumpur JKR headquarters.



What motivated him most was to oppose the British civil, mechanical and electrical engineering institutions which were trying to conduct joint examinations for local candidates. Another factor that compelled him to act was that membership of these institutions was a must if engineers in the Civil Service were to be promoted. This was seen as a move by the British institutions to keep local engineers from being independent.

These institutions had submitted their application to the then Works Minister, Allahyarham Tun Sardon Jubir for permission to conduct their examinations locally. However, Allahyarham Tan Sri Ir. (Dr) Haji Yusoff was able to persuade the Minister, whom he had personally known, not to reply to the institutions, pending the registration of IEM. When he was transferred to Johor Bahru in 1958, he commuted frequently to Kuala Lumpur to hold "secret" meetings with his fellow engineers to draw up the Constitution of the proposed Institution.

His hard work paid off when The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia, was officially formed on 1 May 1959. ■

Extracted and adapted from the IEM 25th Anniversary Report, 1984

Allahyarham Tan Sri Ir. (Dr) Haji Yusoff served as the President from 1959 to 1962. He was also an Honorary Fellow member of IEM. He served for many years in government and quasi government committees and had contributed towards the advancement of the profession. He was formerly the Director General of the Public Works Department, Peninsular Malaysia. For his dedication to the nation, Allahyarham Tan Sri Ir. (Dr) Haji Yusoff was awarded the Panglima Setia Mahkota (PSM) by DYMM Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di Pertuan Agong in 1968. He was also very active in the Muslim Welfare Association, PERKIM, of which he was the national Vice President for many years. He was also the Chairman of the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Council.