

OFFICIAL OPENING SPEECH
INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK (ICW)
AND BUILDXPO 2023
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MITEC
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(SALUTATIONS)

Distinguished dignitaries, esteemed leaders of the construction industry, honorable members of the audience,

1. I extend my heartfelt gratitude for the warm welcome. It is an immense honour to stand before you at this prestigious event, the International Construction Week 2023, hosted by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Malaysia and the Ministry of Works Malaysia.

2. As the Minister of Works, I feel very privileged to address this gathering of an esteemed audience of professionals and builders in the construction industry. Your presence here today speaks volumes about your unwavering dedication and commitment to propelling Malaysia forward.

Significance of the industry

3. The construction industry serves as a dynamic catalyst, igniting opportunities that reverberate across sectors, from manufacturing to services. Each project becomes a symbol of economic vitality and societal advancement, creating a ripple effect of prosperity. Businesses flourish, entrepreneurs invest, and communities thrive with improved infrastructure. This is the transformative power of the industry, an integral force propelling our nation's march toward progress.

4. Yet, today, we find ourselves at a pivotal juncture in the construction industry. It is no longer solely about erecting structures; it is about constructing a sustainable future for our people and our planet. The construction industry, with its transformative power, plays a pivotal role in shaping the environment we live in. Our choices today will echo through generations, influencing not just the physical landscape but the social fabric of our society and the ethical compass guiding our actions. The theme "Leading ESG in Construction" takes center stage, embodying our collective commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance principles that serve as our moral compass. It is our responsibility to ensure that this industry becomes a beacon of sustainable development, setting new standards for environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and ethical governance.

GROWTH

5. I wholeheartedly acknowledge the remarkable growth of Malaysia's construction sector. As of September 2023, an impressive 9,144 projects have taken flight, showcasing the vibrancy of our construction industry. These endeavors represent substantial investments, with RM63 billion dedicated to private initiatives and RM84 billion for government projects. Notably, 91% of these projects are proudly managed by local contractors, a testament to their expertise in shaping Malaysia's infrastructure landscape. These statistics not only symbolize contracts but also embody progress, development, and the unwavering promise of a brighter future. Today's infrastructural investments pave the way for enhanced connectivity, improved education, superior healthcare, and an elevated quality of life for every Malaysian.

Madani Economic Framework and the impact of Budget 2024 on the construction industry

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. The Madani Economic Framework, "Empowering the People," was launched on 27th July 2023. This framework focuses on two key areas: restructuring the economy to position Malaysia as a leading Asian economy and enhancing the quality of life for all Malaysians. In line with this, Budget 2024 has outlined three main focus areas: Best governance for service agility; Restructuring of the economy to increase growth; and Improving people's living standards. These focus areas reflect the Unity government's commitment to good governance,

improving the well-being of the people, and driving economic growth through strategic measures outlined in the Budget 2024.

7. The construction industry stands to benefit significantly from these measures. Allow me to mention several key allocations that empower its growth:

- A substantial amount of RM27 billion is allocated for various infrastructure projects. This massive investment will not only create job opportunities but also enhance connectivity, improve transportation systems, and boost economic growth across the nation.
- RM24.7 Billion is allocated for the People's Housing Projects, emphasizing our commitment to providing affordable housing for all Malaysians. This allocation will address the pressing need for adequate and affordable housing, ensuring that every citizen has access to safe and comfortable homes.
- RM2.4 billion is allocated for the construction, maintenance, and refurbishment of government quarters. This investment aims to improve the living conditions of our public servants, providing them with conducive and modern accommodations.
- RM2.8 billion is allocated for the maintenance of federal roads and bridges, with RM300 million specifically designated for contractors in the G1 to G4 categories. This allocation not only supports infrastructure upkeep but also provides opportunities for contractors of different capacities and capabilities to contribute to national development.

TVET

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

8. Speaking of capacity and capability, I am reminded of the timeless words of Nelson Mandela, who once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." These words hold profound meaning when we consider the immense significance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in driving Malaysia's sustainable development.
9. In our pursuit of progress, TVET stands as a crucial pillar that equips individuals with practical skills, fostering a skilled workforce that is vital for our economic growth. It goes beyond traditional education, nurturing innovation and progress across industries, and opening doors to diverse career opportunities.
10. Importantly, TVET aligns perfectly with the pillars of Malaysia Madani. It champions green technologies, paving the way for a greener and more sustainable future. It bridges the gap between education and employment, boosting employability and entrepreneurship, driving economic growth, and creating individual opportunities.
11. Innovation is at the heart of TVET. It cultivates technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and a mindset for continuous learning. It encourages entrepreneurship and empowers individuals to contribute to the development of new technologies and solutions that will shape our future.

12. By investing in TVET, we are investing in the foundation of our nation's progress. We are building a skilled workforce that will not only contribute to economic growth but also ensure a prosperous and innovative future for all Malaysians.

CSQF

13. I am truly delighted and honored to announce a significant milestone related to TVET: the establishment of the Construction Skills Qualification Framework (CSQF) by CIDB Malaysia - a system designed to provide a structured approach to skills development and training within the construction industry in Malaysia.

14. The impact of CSQF will be transformative. We are not just setting standards; we are shaping the future of construction expertise in Malaysia. This framework serves as a beacon of opportunity, guiding aspiring individuals toward acquiring the necessary skills and qualifications that the industry demands. It signifies our commitment to excellence, ensuring that those entering the construction sector are equipped with the right knowledge and capabilities to excel in their roles.

15. The establishment of CSQF not only elevates the standards of our workforce but also solidifies Malaysia's position as a hub of skilled professionals in the global construction arena. This achievement is a testament to our dedication to fostering talent, promoting innovation, and driving sustainable growth and it aligns directly with the aspirations of Malaysia Madani to be a hub of innovation and learning.

ISO/IEC 17024:2012 CERTIFICATION

16. Today, as part of the CSQF journey, CIDB Malaysia will be receiving the International Standards Organisation and International Electrotechnical Commission ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Certification from the Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM). The ISO/IEC 17024:2012 certification is on Conformity Assessment: General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons, which is an international recognition in the assessment and accreditation of construction personnel competency. CIDB will be receiving the ISO/IEC for three construction trades highly in demand in the Oil & Gas industry, namely; Welding, Non-destructive Testing (NDT) and Blasting and Painting.
17. With the ISO/IEC certification, all Construction Skills Competency Certification or Sijil Kompetensi Kemahiran Pembinaan (SKKP) issued by CIDB Malaysia for these three competency areas, will be recognised internationally. Skills competency training in Welding, NDT and blasting and painting training for youth and construction personnel is available at CIDB wholly owned training Centres, namely the Akademi Binaan Malaysia (ABM) and CIDB Tech.

Closing

Ladies and Gentlemen,

18. As we look toward the future, I have great hopes for the construction industry in Malaysia. I see a future where our buildings are not just structures of steel and concrete but symbols of our collective dreams

and aspirations. I see a future where our workforce is not just skilled but empowered with knowledge and integrity. I see a future where the construction industry is not just a sector of our economy but a driving force behind our nation's progress.

19. Professionalism, integrity, collaboration, and recognition begin today. The future isn't just a destination; it's your masterpiece in the making. You're not just the architects; you're the builders of a sustainable tomorrow. As we embrace Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles and pioneer sustainable construction practices, let us remember that each blueprint, each innovation, and each partnership is a brushstroke on the canvas of a sustainable future. May our masterpiece inspire awe and wonder, not only for its beauty but also for the transformative power it holds.

20. Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to CIDB for their unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation. Thank you to everyone present here for your dedication to the construction industry, and thank you for believing in the vision of a better Malaysia. Together, we can weave a tapestry of flourishing ecosystems, thriving communities, and responsible governance.

21. Having said all that, it is with great pleasure that I hereby declare the International Construction Week (ICW) and BuildXpo 2023, officially open. Let us forge ahead on this journey towards a socially responsible, environmentally conscious, and economically thriving Malaysia.

Thank you and Salam Malaysia Madani.