



OFFICIAL ICW OPENING CEREMONY BY

**YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA**

**THE INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK (ICW) &
BUILDXPO 2024**

THEME: ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION

23 OCTOBER 2024 | 11:15 A.M. | MITEC, KUALA LUMPUR

(SALUTATIONS TO BE UPDATED ACCORDINGLY)

Assalamualaikum dan Selamat Sejahtera.

1. Today's opening of the International Construction Week & BuildXpo 2024 marks a pivotal event that unites industry leaders, innovators, and visionaries from across the globe. This year's theme is not only timely but also a clarion call for harnessing the massive opportunities for Malaysia's construction sector and the broader economy.
2. As we reflect on Malaysia's journey, we see a nation built on the foundations of resilience, innovation, and strategic foresight. Today, we continue that legacy, but with an even sharper focus on the future – one underpinned by the very latest in technology and propelled by our ambition to remain competitive on the global stage.
3. The construction industry is not just about building structures; it is a dynamic catalyst that ignites opportunities across every sector, from manufacturing to services.

4. During the pandemic, the industry faced significant challenges from halting construction and disrupted supply chains. As a result, the sector contracted by 19.3% in 2020 and 5.1% in 2021. However, through determination of all industry players and strategic recovery efforts, we witnessed positive growth of 5.0% in 2022 and 6.1% in 2023.

5. Today, I am proud to announce that for the first three quarters of 2024, the construction sector has soared, recording an impressive 17.3% GDP growth. **This marks the first double-digit growth we have achieved since 2014**, reflecting the industry's capacity to overcome adversity and emerge stronger.

6. Undoubtedly, this remarkable growth has far-reaching benefits for Malaysia's economy. The surge in construction activity will lead to more job creation, bolster domestic and foreign investment, and drive infrastructure development across the country, propelling Malaysia as the leader in the region's construction industry.

7. The construction industry is growing in tandem with the evolution of digital technology including big data and artificial intelligence which exponentially increases demand for data centres.
8. Our nation's rise in the Data Centre Cost Index – surpassing Oslo, Berlin, and Sydney – demonstrates our growing leadership in this sector. Industry giants like Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Google have chosen Malaysia for their data centre expansions due to our strategic location, robust infrastructure, and supportive government policies.
9. This symbiotic relationship between construction technology and data centres will be pivotal in driving Malaysia's leadership in both industries. But as this growth accelerates, so too does the need for energy and water, with data centres requiring vast amounts of both to function efficiently.
10. Therefore, integrating green technologies and smart energy management into data centre construction will be critical in ensuring growth aligns with Malaysia's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our transition towards a low-carbon economy by 2050.

11. Our choices today will echo through generations, influencing not only the physical landscape but also the social fabric of our society and the ethical governance we uphold.
12. But technological advancement alone will not suffice. The backbone of our industry remains its people. We recognise the shortage of skilled labour and are committed to addressing this through robust training programs and upskilling initiatives. As of September 2024, over 1.12 million personnel have been registered with CIDB, a testament to professionalising the workforce.
13. We are expanding TVET education to ensure our workforce is equipped to handle advanced technologies, such as AI and robotics. This is how Malaysia will continue to meet the growing demand for skilled workers.
14. With tender prices expected to rise, the MADANI Government are taking proactive steps to ensure our construction industry remains competitive and sustainable. By enhancing public-private partnerships (PPPs), we are driving major infrastructure projects, such as the Sarawak-Sabah Link Road Phase 2, the Pan-Borneo Highway upgrades, and data centre

developments in Johor. These initiatives ensure that our sector stays resilient amid rising costs.

15. The government is committed to continue investing heavily in green building practices and low-carbon infrastructure development, further aligning with our commitment to the SDGs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

16. We are on the cusp of a new era in construction—one where digitalisation, sustainability, and collaboration will be key drivers of success. I invite all of you here today to be part of this exciting journey.
17. 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. Professionalism, integrity, collaboration, and recognition begin today.
18. Together, we can ensure that Malaysia not only remains a regional leader but emerges as a global powerhouse in construction, setting the benchmark for innovation and excellence.

19. Thank you to the organisers, CIDB Malaysia, the Ministry of Works and Qube Integrated, and my utmost appreciation to all the movers and shakers of the construction industry present here today for your dedication and vision in propelling the construction industry forward. May ICW and BuildXpo 2024 be a catalyst for the future we all envision.

20. With this, it is with great honour that I declare the ICW and BuildXpo 2024, officially open!