

A Visit to Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) Headquarters, Bandar Baru Bangi

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICAL DIVISION



Ir. Prof. Dr Thomas Choong Shean Yaw

A group consisting of 25 IEM members and non-members led by Ir. Prof. Dr Thomas Choong Shean Yaw (committee member) and Ms. Kek Mei Tzy (secretariat) from the Chemical Engineering Technical Division (CETD) visited the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) Headquarters on 28 August 2012. The highlight of the day was the visit to the margarine and biodiesel pilot plant.

The oil palm industry is now one of the main pillars of Malaysian economy. MPOB is the custodian of the oil palm industry in Malaysia and is entrusted with the responsibility to meet new challenges through excellence in research and development (R&D) and services. MPOB has more than three decades of concerted effort in research and development related to palm oil industry. MPOB's commitment has been recognised and rewarded through numerous awards, such as the latest 2010 Frost & Sullivan Award for Excellence in Research and Innovation.

Despite the rather heavy downpour, most of the participants arrived at MPOB on time. We were warmly received by En. Jamil and the rest of the representatives from various divisions of MPOB. We were first briefed about MPOB, followed by a Q&A session. We then spent about 30 minutes in the margarine pilot plant, where a very comprehensive and interesting explanation was given by Dr Miskandar Mat Sahri. MPOB has successfully developed an impressive margarine which can be used at temperature below 20° C.

After leaving the margarine pilot plant, we moved to the palm biodiesel pilot plant. MPOB has more than twenty years of experience in palm biodiesel research. We were briefed on various technical aspects of the pilot plant by Mrs. Nabilah Kamaliah Mustafa and Dr Harisson Lau. Subsequently, we were given an opportunity to tour the palm biodiesel pilot plant. Thereafter, we spent about 30 minutes at the Palm Gallery and Souvenirs Shop, where a good collection of books and products related to palm oil are displayed and sold.

At the end of the tour, we were treated to refreshments, courtesy of MPOB. A token of appreciation was also presented to En. Jamil by the Session Chairperson, Ir. Prof. Dr Thomas Choong, before the session ended. ■



Briefing on various technical aspects by representatives from MPOB

Ir. Prof. Dr Thomas Choong Shean Yaw, is a professor of chemical engineering at the Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering. He is now the advisor of Chemical Engineering Technical Division.



The visitors being briefed at the biodiesel pilot plant