



Witty Realism

IR. SHAIK ABDUL WAHED DATO' HJ RAHIM RECENTLY LAUNCHED TWO UNIQUE PUBLICATIONS THAT TAKE ON SEPARATE VIEWS OF THE WORLD OF ENGINEERING. NADINE FERNANDEZ GETS THE BIG PICTURE...

With years of experience in the engineering field and having inspired many an engineering idea with his fellow colleagues, Ir Shaik Abdul Wahed Dato' Hj Rahim, Director of Jurutera Perunding GEA(m) Sdn. Bhd. has much to share, by way of views on the industry. With that in mind, Shaik decided to do this in a form that could be understood from both an engineering and non-engineering standpoint.

Thus, two unique publications came about, written and illustrated by the illustrious personality. The first book, called *The Engineer*, is a collection of comical illustrations inspired by the author's experiences while the second book is titled *Slopes Made Simple* which is meant to be an easy reading book for anyone wishing to understand slopes from an engineer's perspective.

Having been described by his peers as "the rarest of individuals - a professional engineer who is a cartoonist and one who can look at engineering issues with wit and humour", it is no wonder that the creative guy has chosen to print his concepts, concerns and designs in a comic.

"The *Engineer* is an anthology of drawings representing 30 years of looking at engineering at a somewhat different perspective" says Shaik who began sketching his thoughts in 1978.

He proudly adds, "The compilation of cartoons, aimed at taking 'pot shots' at the engineering and construction industry, is the only one of its kind in the world! You see, poking fun at the engineering trade itself is apparently "frowned upon" since engineering is "too much of a serious business to be funny."

"Apart from being a great read for a good laugh, the book is very close to home and gives a valuable insight into the evolution of engineering and engineering everywhere," Shaik shares.

With all his years of experience, Shaik is now a consulting engineer for civil engineering and through his work, he has managed to observe and chew on the many issues especially ones faced with developments on slopes which is the premise of his second book, *Slopes Made Simple*. "Many questions arose following the unfortunate and sad collapse of Highland Towers some time ago. Over time, I realised that many of these queries still went unanswered," expresses Shaik. As mentioned, *Slopes Made Simple* is aimed at non-engineers living with slopes and almost anybody who would like to have an understanding of what constitutes its

maintenance.

One of the greatest challenges Shaik has faced is actually one that haunts him currently - his capacity to contribute to the industry and to society now that he has retired. "It has been a complete change for me going from engineering to cartooning but in the end, I still want a say."

Shaik discloses that since his career change, he has been compared to the likes of Lat and Kee. "I find it rather exciting yet really odd being compared to them. I may have come from the same school as Lat but he is among one of Malaysia's greatest cartoonists. I have a lot of respect for him," he said.

With a motto like 'Do it right the first time', it is no wonder that apart from his family, what Shaik is proudest about is pretty much all his past work. "Being in civil engineering, there really isn't any room for errors," he says.

The books were launched by the Chief Minister of Malacca, YAB Dato' Seri Mohd Ali Rustam. Also present were YB Tan Sri Dato' (Dr) Ir. Jamilus bin Hussein (Chairman, CIDB; President/CEO KLIA Consultancy Services Sdn Bhd) and YB Dato' Seri Dr. Tengku Zainal Adlin (Vice President Emeritus WWF Malaysia; Head of Sabah Tourism).

Despite his achievements, Shaik describes himself as "an ordinary engineer". An optimist and fun-loving by nature, he hopes to continue sharing his humour by contributing to various people magazines as well as perhaps publish a couple more books on engineering and cartoons. "I hope to remain on the advisory end as goodness knows the industry sure needs it!" he concludes, laughing. □