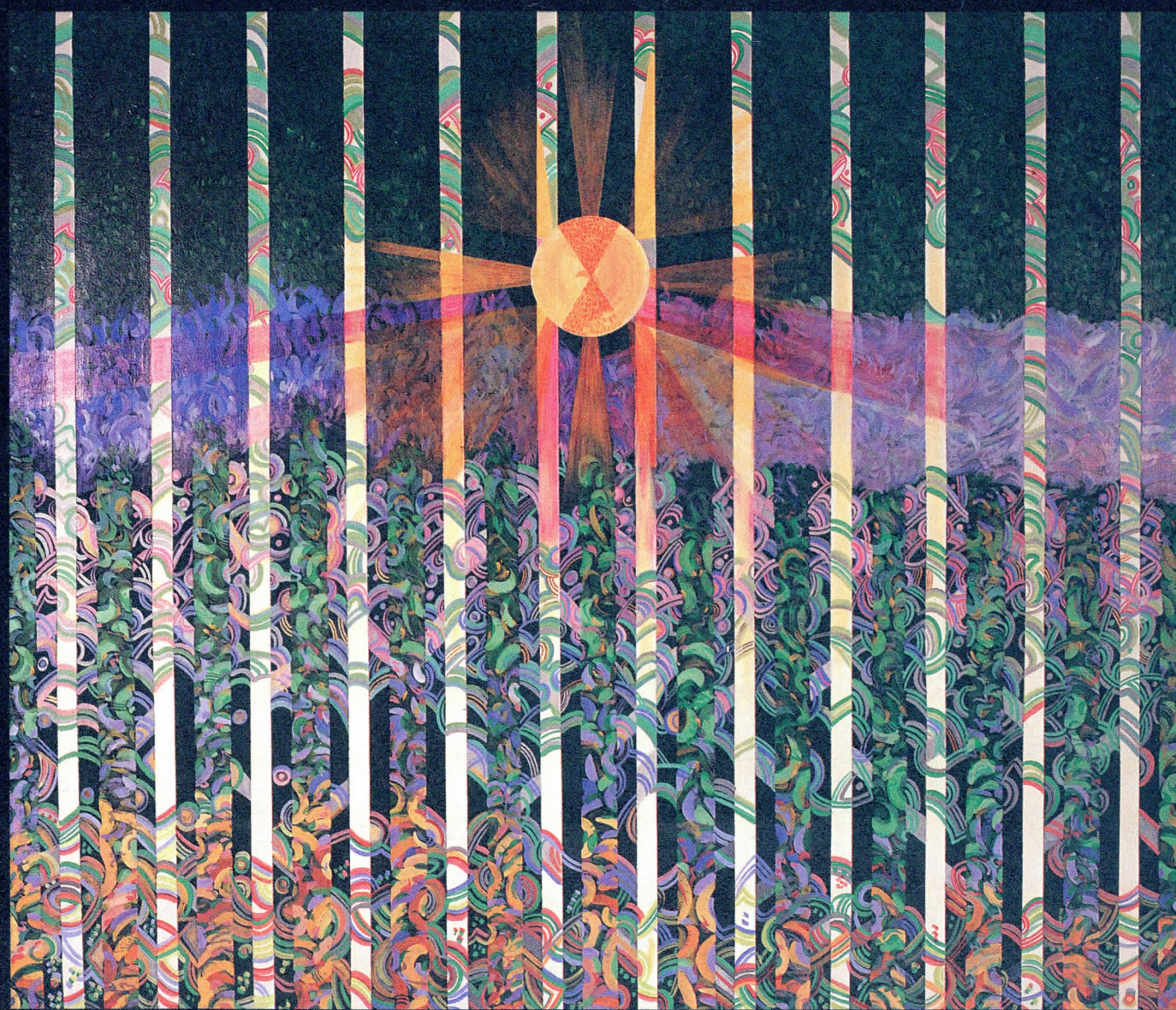


PROJEK LEBUHRAYA UTARA-SELATAN

The Anatomy of an Expressway

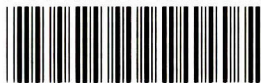


PROJEK LEBUHRAYA UTARA-SELATAN

The Anatomy of an Expressway

Desmond Muzaffar Tate and Syed Mohd Bakar

PUSTAKA PERDANA



1012065



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

Iwish to congratulate Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan Bhd (PLUS) on the official opening of its North-South Expressway, a landmark which signals the coming of age of Malaysia's road transport system.

The completion of the expressway fifteen months ahead of schedule demonstrates not only the dedication and hard work of PLUS but reflects also its close cooperation with the Government. This is clearly a positive outcome of Malaysia's privatization policy where although the organization and management of the Expressway's construction are handled by the private sector, it is in effect a national project, carried out with full Government support and financial backing with the ultimate purpose of serving the growing transportation needs of Malaysia. The Expressway, while providing improved accessibility, will be able to accelerate the development of industry, tourism and trade in the west coast of Peninsula Malaysia.

PLUS and all those associated with it deserved to be congratulated on the successful conclusion of this ambitious project. The publishing of this book – Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan: The Anatomy of an Expressway – is timely and is a record of how this achievement was made possible, a product which Malaysians should be proud of.



DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD

Kuala Lumpur

30 July 1994



A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF WORKS

The Ministry of Works takes special pride in the completion of the North-South Expressway Project under the management of PLUS. It is a project with which the Ministry has been intimately linked since the very beginning.

The plans for the Expressway originated from this Ministry. Two fifths of its construction were actually carried out under the direct auspices of the Ministry through its Highway Planning Unit. It was later handed over to the Highway Authority of Malaysia which was also responsible initially for operating the tolling system.

The privatization of the project was a necessary measure to overcome the problems of escalating costs and of meeting target dates which lay beyond the resources of Government and its agencies. Nevertheless, the Ministry, and in particular, the Highway Authority which comes under its portfolio, still had an important role to play as the monitoring authority to guide and assist PLUS in the execution of its task.

With the completion of the construction of the Expressway, PLUS now assumes the second and equally important task of operating and maintaining it at the highest possible standard. The Ministry of Works and the Highway Authority of Malaysia will continue to play their supporting roles.

I congratulate PLUS on the publication of Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan, The Anatomy of an Expressway, which provides a useful background to the story of the building of the North-South Expressway.



DATUK LEO MOGGIE

Kuala Lumpur
29 July 1994



FOREWORD

This book was commissioned in order to commemorate the successful completion of the North-South Expressway by PLUS, which was able to do this fifteen months ahead of the original scheduled date. This is an achievement of which all of us in PLUS feel justly proud.

At the same time, however, we are also very conscious that this achievement does not belong to PLUS alone. Two fifths of the Expressway had already been completed when PLUS took over the responsibility for finishing the job in November 1988. This was the work of the Malaysian Highway Authority which also succeeded in completing all the initial surveys and the projected alignment for the entire length of the route. Moreover, their connection with the Expressway did not come to an end when they handed over responsibility for its construction to PLUS. The Authority continued to play a key role as the official monitoring body, charged with ensuring that the Government's requirements and the conditions of the concessionaire's contract were strictly met. It was also the Government agency made responsible for finalizing all land acquisitions necessary, a task in which it had been engaged from the very beginning, and also for liaising with all the Ministries and Government Departments, etc., connected in one way or other with the Project. Without the Malaysian Highway Authority's close assistance and cooperation, PLUS would have been unable to deliver the goods.

We are also greatly indebted to a great number of nameless officers in various Government bodies and organizations whose lives were complicated by our needs, but whose willingness to help was equally vital to the success of our operation. In this connection, special mention should be made of the State Governments through whose territory the North-South Expressway passes. Needless to say, their cooperation and assistance was particularly essential, just as it was freely given.

It can now be said with complete confidence that the successful completion of the Expressway serves as a complete vindication of the privatization policy adopted by the Government. It has provided the opportunity for Malaysian financiers, businessmen, contractors and workers to show what they can do. We are particularly proud of the fact that the Project has been financed entirely from

Malaysian sources within the country, that the great majority of contractors were Malaysians and that the greater part of the development of the Project has been handled by Malaysian consultants. We are indeed proud to acknowledge the contribution that has been made by our bankers, consultants and contractors to the successful construction of the Expressway.

We are also grateful for the help which we have received from our foreign friends - consultants, contractors and experts - who have been willing to share their expertise with us.

Last but not least, we are proud of the role played by our Malaysian workers who have completed a tough job with dedication and without complaint. Not to be forgotten are the Unit Peronda Lebuhraya PDRM whose services in ensuring the safety of users of the Expressway are indispensable.

In other words, we may rejoice in what has been a truly national achievement, in which we in PLUS are very proud to have played a central role. The nature of this achievement is outlined in the pages of this book, which we hope will provide the reader with insight and entertainment.



TAN SRI RADIN SOENARNO

Chairman

PLUS Bhd.

29 July 1994

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

This book, commissioned by PLUS, sets out to describe how the nation's greatest single engineering project, the North-South Expressway, came into being. It does not claim to be an authoritative history, because constraints on time available for its writing and the close proximity of the event have made that quite impossible. It does attempt, however, to present in outline the story of this great achievement which has involved statesmen and politicians, businessmen and consultants, government officials, highway engineers and a whole host of other professional men, contractors, suppliers, foremen and the glorious labour force itself. Also included are Malaysians of all walks of life, whose lives have been affected in one way or other by the construction of the Expressway.

The book, perforce, has had to touch on a number of issues which still remain a matter of controversy today, but while reporting, superficially enough, on these episodes, it has not been our intention to pass any final judgements. Our theme remains the creating of a national achievement rather than the sectional polemics along the way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the writing of this book, the authors owe deep gratitude to a wide range of people who have encouraged and helped them in their efforts. First and foremost, we would like to thank our sponsors, namely Datuk Wira Halim Saad who is the progenitor, and the PLUS management who have helped us in every possible way and have placed their facilities at our disposal. In this connection, we wish to include all members of the staff in PLUS headquarters with whom we have had dealings in the course of our work and who have been unfailingly courteous and cooperative on all occasions. Mention should also be made of various other members of the PLUS staff, including toll supervisors, managers and tellers and members of the PLUS Ronda whom we had the opportunity to meet and talk to at various locations along the NSE itself. We are most grateful to each and every one of them.

We owe a special word of thanks to all those who agreed to be interviewed by us, formally or informally, and gave us the benefit of their knowledge, views and experience. These include Dato' Zaidan Othman, Dato' D. F. Wilson, Dato' Anuar Othman, Dato' Bahari Ali, Encik Ikmal Hijaz Hashim, Mr. Hew Thin Chay, Encik Ibrahim Bidin, Mr. Selva Raja Letchumanan, Encik Ismail Basri, Encik Hisham Othman, Tuan Haji Suhaimi Jusoh, Encik Badrul Hisham Mahari, Encik Che Khalib Md. Noh, Encik Abu Bakar Abdul Rahman, Encik Mohamed Kadri Taib and Encik Kamarul Adlan. To Dr Ramli Mohamad we are particularly indebted for his comments, advice and for his contribution to Chapters 9 and 10 and Appendix 11 of this book.

We are also grateful to Encik Salehuddin Hashim who gave freely of his time to tell us of the pioneering days, and also to Dr C.T. Toh for his information regarding the Machap experiment.

We are also indebted to the following whom we met in Kedah and Johor in connection with the story of the NSE: Kapt (B) Zahir, Mr. Bun Yin, Encik Ghazalli Abdullah, Encik Leong Kwai Lum and Tuan Syed Abdul Hamid Syed Abdul Rahman, construction engineers with PL; Encik Albert Aw (Aw Pottery); the *ketua kampong* of Kampong Perak (Central Johor), Kampong Dalam Baroh and Kampong Masjid Hujung (North Kedah), along with a number of inhabitants of these and neighbouring places.

We wish to reserve a special word of thanks for Cik Juliana Shamsuddin, who was appointed our secretary for the purposes of this book. We are greatly beholden to her for the charm and efficiency with which she has assisted us in our work. We should also like to make special mention of Cik Mariam Zamani Md Ismail and the following officers of the PLUS HQ staff who sacrificed many hours in proof reading the text: Puan Geraldine Jambu, Encik Adnan Mohammad and Encik Ramli Yusoff.

We are very conscious of the fact that because of time constraints there remain many whom we should have interviewed in connection with the NSE achievement, but did not, and yet others whose names should have been mentioned in its pages but are not. To them we tender our apologies but trust they will agree with us that the real hero in this story is not any particular individual but all those involved in the enterprise as a collective whole.

May, 1994
Kuala Lumpur

DESMOND MUZAFFAR TATE
SYED MOHD BAKAR

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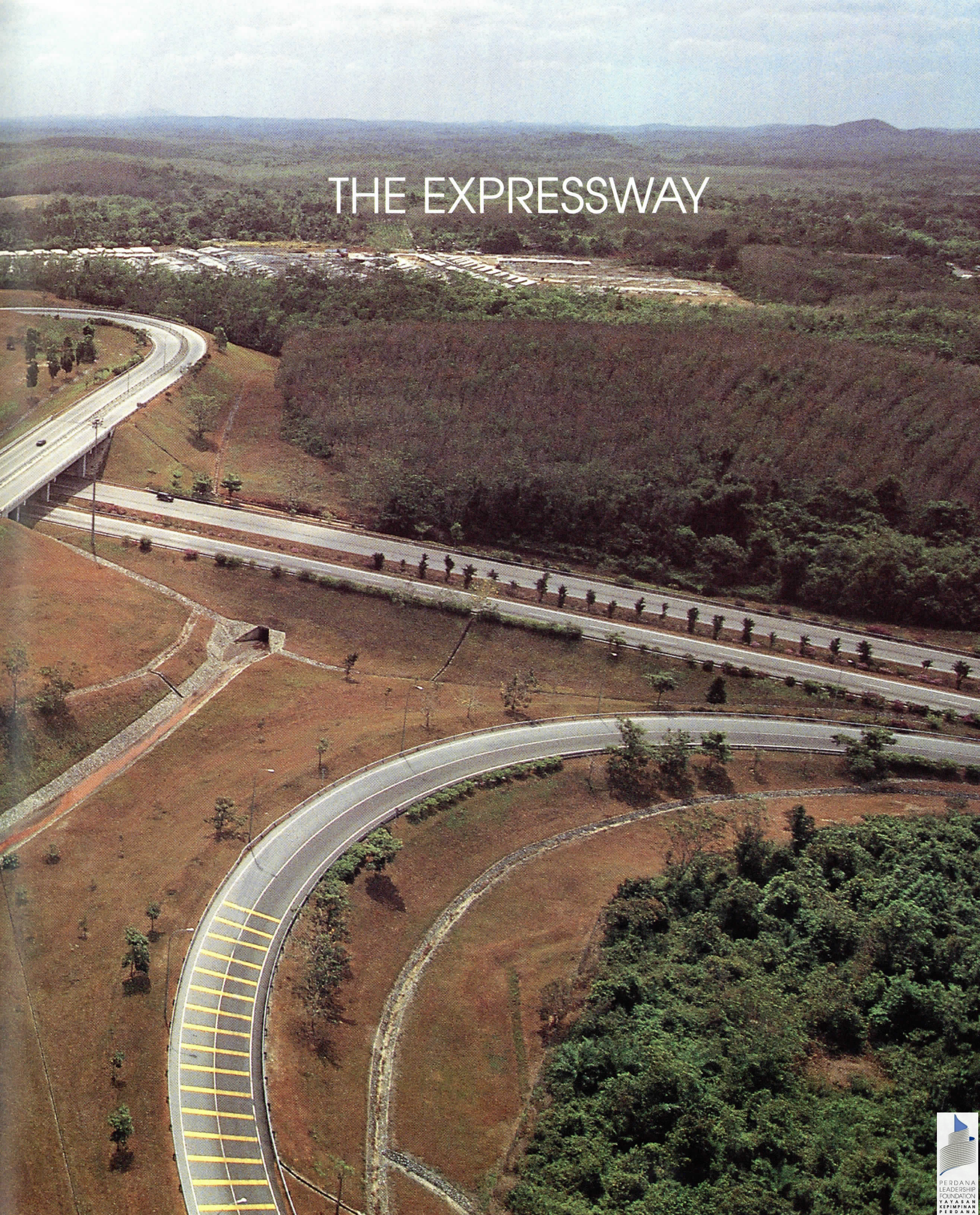
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ABBREVIATIONS

B. O. T.	'Build, Operate, Transfer' (a form of concession)
C.P.M	Critical Path Method (type of analysis for problem solving)
CIMA	Cement Industries of Malaysia Berhad
EPU	Economic Planning Unit (of the Prime Minister's Department)
HBN	Hatibudi Nominees Sdn Berhad
HPU	Highway Planning Unit (of the Ministry of Works)
ICP	Inter-Departmental Committee on Privatization
KLSE	Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange
LLM	Lembaga Lebuhraya Malaysia (see MHA)
MCKK	Malay College, Kuala Kangsar
MHA	Malaysian Highway Authority (see LLM)
NEP	New Economic Policy
NKVE	New Klang Valley Expressway
NSE	North-South Expressway
PL	Pengurusan Lebuhraya Berhad
PLUS	Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan Berhad
PROPEL	Projek Penyelenggaraan Lebuhraya Berhad
UEM	United Engineers (Malaysia) Berhad
JV	Joint Venture



THE EXPRESSWAY



IPOH, Monday, 7 February 1994.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Azlan Shah, today officially opened the last link of the North-South Highway, the Gopeng-Tapah stretch south of here.

It marked the successful completion of the 847.7 kilometre highway from the Malaysian-Thailand border to Johor Baru by Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan(PLUS) Bhd.

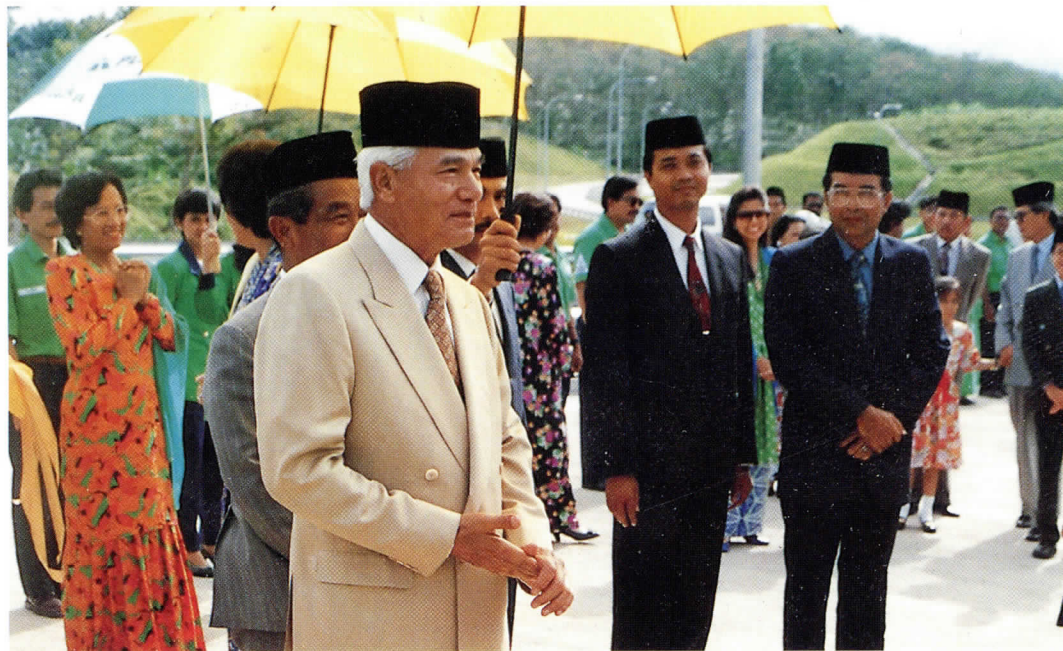
It was also a fulfilment of his desire, expressed to PLUS, to get the stretch completed before his term of office as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong ends in April.

As the King unveiled the plaque at the layby beside Gunung Tempurung, where the opening ceremony was held, coloured flares were shot and the sound of explosions rebounded from the hills around.

Hundreds of balloons, bunched according to the colours of each State through which the highway runs, were released.....

*New Straits Times,
8 February 1994.*

In this manner, with all the dignity, sparkle and splendour that Malaysians are so good at putting on for a great occasion, and in the midst of the most beautiful surroundings, the last link in the new North-South Expressway (NSE) was officially opened. Everyone agreed that the completion of the highway well ahead of schedule was little short of a miracle. Even the Prime Minister himself proclaimed the project



‘a success’, which was tantamount to saying the same thing. There was also no doubting about its impact on the country, already making itself felt in a variety of ways. ‘Road travel in the country will no longer be a chore...but a pleasant experience and a holiday in itself’, declared Tan Sri Radin Soenarno, the Chairman of the concessionaire company, PLUS, on the same occasion, an opinion which was supported by letters which appeared in the Press from satisfied road users. ‘We paid a total of RM 12.30 in toll’ [i.e. between Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh], wrote one cost-conscious motorist to *The Star* a week later, commenting on his hassle-free Chinese New Year holiday drive, ‘but unanimously agreed that it was worth every sen’.

However, the impact of the new Expressway goes much deeper than the pleasure and convenience of motorists. It has created a new dimension for Malaysian entrepreneurs, who have gained the knowledge and experience to be able to compete in the interna-



tional market. It has broadened the horizons of Malaysian bankers and financiers and given them the confidence to take on projects once regarded as lying beyond their scope. Malaysian engineers have emerged from the experience of planning, designing and constructing the Expressway with an understanding of state-of-the-art technology while Malaysian contractors at

all levels have acquired a knowledge of techniques and management which has transformed their potential and capabilities.

The impact of the Expressway will clearly make itself felt on overall economic development in the country. It has already modified transport patterns and re-intensified competition between road, rail and air, and has also stimulated the development of industrial and commercial projects along its length from north to south. In other words, with the completion of the NSE, a major step forward in the social and economic modernization of the country had been taken.

This book sets out to show how this great national achievement came about.

