

# Young engineers eager to shine

*MMC Pembetungan Langat provides young talents with space and opportunity to hone their skills*

by **HABHAJAN SINGH**

FROM the heights of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai to the depths of a major sewerage system project in Malaysia, Alia Shazwani Abd Hakim comes across as a mature, confident and driven engineer.

The 32-year-old lady engineer saw history being made when the Dubai tower was coming up. She is now involved in an equally massive project as part of the team working on the Centralised Sewage Treatment Plant (CSTP) and Sewerage Conveyance System in Langat, Selangor.

The civil engineering graduate moves from office to ground with ease. There is no hint of hesitation or fear as she strides along in her daily job.

"I'm part of the operation team for the Network Pump Station. I am in charge of five out of 11 pump stations for the Langat sewerage project — four new pump stations and upgrading another. We are to deliver the finished products with functional mechanical equipment in accordance with the needs statement by the clients," she said.

Alia Shazwani is one of the many young engineers spotted at the Langat CSTP. She works for MMC Pembetungan Langat Sdn Bhd (MMC PLSB), a wholly owned subsidiary of MMC Corp Bhd.

The project, awarded by the government, is scheduled to complete in October 2020. It will rationalise 164 local sewage treatment plants in the area of Cheras Batu 11, Desa Baiduri, Cheras Jaya, Kajang 1 and Kajang 3. It also involves the construction of some 105km sewerage piping network and seven new pumping stations, and the upgrading of four existing pumping stations that will link directly into a centralised location.

At the end of the day, it is expected

to improve the quality of effluent, while reducing one of the point sources for the ammonia pollution into the Langat River. Hence, the excitement for people involved in the project. It will make a difference.

Alia Shazwani joined the MMC Group as a senior engineer in June 2012. So, what has she learnt over the last few years?

"Frankly speaking, it's a challenge being a lady in this industry. The respect you get from co-workers is definitely different from the opposite gender. I guess they are just scared of women empowerment.

"But I just take it as a work challenge. It will not stop me from working in this industry," she said.

But there are plenty of positive takeaways. "I don't mind the attention I sometimes get. I do get the special treatment from the guys since I'm the only lady in the team," she said with a grin.

She holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) of Civil Engineering from Universiti Teknologi Petronas and a Masters of Business Administration from Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

## Training Opportunities

When sharing their work experience, one common tribute from the young talents was how they have benefitted from the training opportunities, either in-house or externally. The group of engineers, mostly in their late 20s and early 30s, value those moments. It builds them up and it certainly allows them to carry themselves forward more confidently.

They have gone to various types of courses. Emphasis, naturally, is given to courses directly linked to their present job scope. But that is not a rule, though.

"You get to go for the training with the approval of the head of department. Staff can also propose training not listed in the current list. I've done so in the past," said Faizul Henri Firdaus.

Faizul, 31, has attended at least eight training sessions since joining

the MMC Group in 2015. They include authorised entrant and standby person for confined space, first aider, crane and lifting inspection training, safety and health at

work and safety equipment training.

With these training and involvement in the day-to-day activities, Faizul said it has allowed him to pick up various skills directly related to the job at hand. They include, for example, how to manage the project schedule on site and how to maintain work progress to ensure the project runs smoothly as scheduled.

He has also picked up on areas like ensuring all personnel are coordinating their activities with the other project participants.

Muhammad Iqram Zulkifli, who joined the MMC Group as a design engineer in July 2017, is testimony to the company's liberal policy for

allowing its staff to sign up for training that may not be related directly to their present job scope.

"MMC has provided me an opportunity to develop skills in an area not directly related to my project. It allowed me to attend the Midas Bridge Civil training. I took it up more for my personal self-development as a bridge engineer," he said.

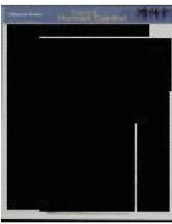
## Learning from Superiors

Norfaiq Syazani Othman, a project executive who joined the group in 2015, values the peer-to-peer learning, as well as picking up from superiors.

"I've learnt how to handle a mega

project and experienced what it is like to work in a big company like MMC. At the same time, I've also had the opportunity to deal with the public, as well as maintained a good relationship with regulatory bodies and consultants," said the site engineer.

The same goes for Mohd Fayuti Ismail, a mechanical and electrical engineer, who joined the MMC Group in 2012. After completing a stint with a double-track project, he was seconded to MMC PLSB in



2016.

In his current role, he manages the contractors to complete the project within the stipulated timeline.

Over the years, he said he has picked up skills in design, planning and project implementation. "My superiors have guided me to handle specific tasks and problems along the way," he said.

### **Beyond the Dirt**

Some of the young engineers have also been given opportunities to shine beyond the daily desk and dirt routine. Mechanical engineer Ahmad Amzar Azmir, who joined the group in 2016, has an interesting story to tell.

In his current job, the Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia graduate has to manage, supervise and monitor site progress. He also has to ensure that the project is completed as per the approved baseline work programme.

It does not end there. He also has to check construction at sites to ensure that it is done according to the approved drawing, all pieces of

process equipment are approved by the client and liaise with the multiple authorities involved in the project.

Then, once a year, he gets assigned to a completely different job. He gets to join a group from the company that is involved in some major external event. In the last three years, he has been involved in the International Greentech and Eco Products Exhibition and Conference Malaysia, as well as AsiaWater.

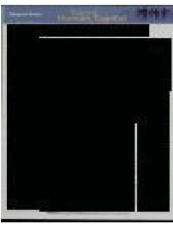
"At these events, I get to meet participants from across the globe. They are sharing and promoting their advanced high-technology products fresh from the oven. It's a fantastic learning platform," he said.

Indeed, learning never ends. It is great to see these young engineers moving about passionately in their chosen field. Needless to say, the companies hiring them play a crucial role in keeping that fire burning.





One common tribute from the young talents was how they have benefitted from various training opportunities



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## SUMMARIES

MMC Pembetulan Langat provides young talents with space and opportunity to hone their skills by H A B H A J A N S I N G H FROM the heights of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai to the depths of a major sewerage system project in Malaysia, Alia Shazwani Abd Hakim comes across as a mature, confident and driven engineer. The 32-year-old lady engineer saw history being made when the Dubai tower was coming up.