

David Bell: Surface engineering geology - a review

Laporan (Report)

Dr. David H. Bell, Senior Lecturer in Engineering Geology, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, gave a talk entitled: "Surface Engineering Geology - A review" to the Society on Monday, 20 August 1990, at the Dept. of Geology, Univ. of Malaya. The talk was attended by about 30 persons, including several engineers from the Public Works Department.

The talk covered a wide spectrum of topics in engineering geology and was well illustrated by numerous case studies drawn from the Speaker's personal experiences. The major topic of discussion was on "landslides", involving problematic schist materials (soils & rocks), volcanic soils, marine soils, montmorillonitic clays, etc. Engineering projects discussed include canals, dams, urban planning (housing, hotels & condominiums, etc.), and coastal cliff stability. One particular case study on a dam (the Clyde Dam) sited on young and active faults as well as several old landslide masses was most interesting indeed. In this particular project, the cost of landslide stabilizations and additional measures required (including consultancy fees) exceeded the cost of building the dam!

The speaker ended the talk by emphasising the need for engineering geologists to be more quantitative in their presentations of findings, maps and reports, and to be more pragmatic in their approach. Some lively discussions followed, and the evening turned out to be a most enlightening one for those who turned up for the talk.

The Society records its sincere thanks to Dr. Bell for taking time off to share some of his professional experiences and views with members of the Society.

Footnote: The talk "Surface Engineering Geology - A review", was in fact delivered as a keynote lecture at the Sixth IAEG Congress held in Amsterdam, 6-10 August, 1990. The interested reader can refer to the Proceedings of the Congress mentioned for details of the paper.



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