

Keynote Paper II
**Challenges in implementing the minerals and geoscience
programmes in the new millennium**

CHEN SHICK PEI

Ibu Pejabat Penyiasatan Kajibumi, Malaysia
Tingkat 19–21, Bangunan Tabung Haji
Jalan Tun Razak
Peti Surat 11110
50736 Kuala Lumpur

From the basic activity of geological mapping and mineral investigations initiated in 1903, the Geological Survey Department Malaysia (GSD) has been progressively expanding its scope, since the early 1970s, to encompass other aspects of geoscience in tandem with development in the country. Today, the primary activities of GSD include regional geological mapping, marine geology, mineral exploration, engineering geology, hydrogeology, environmental geology, and various laboratory services. These activities are undertaken to facilitate the mobilization of the country's mineral resources for national development and to address certain aspects of socio-economic programmes as well as to serve the needs of the private sector.

Presently there is an on-going exercise to merge GSD with the Mines Department into a new entity to be named the Department of Minerals and Geoscience. Even after the merger, minerals and geoscience will remain as one of the core activities of this new department. These activities, which are expected to be concentrated in the states, will be more client-oriented, with emphasis being stressed on the provision of quality information and services to the State Government, other Government agencies, the industries and individuals.

In the coming years, the use of IT as an enabling tool for data collation, analysis, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information will be intensified. This strategic approach will entail the continued maintenance and updating of geoscience and mineral databases which would be linked through an efficient network system to facilitate quick decision-making, and the use of the information by the stakeholders and clients. The department also expects to see an increasing dependence on outsourcing to realise the objectives of some of its activities. In no small measure, this move is expected to stimulate the growth of the private sector in the fields of minerals and geoscience. To live up to these expectations, the department will continuously strive to increase its level of expertise in the minerals and geoscience disciplines to enable it to contribute more effectively to the country's planned R&D activities, industrial development strategies and socio-economic thrusts as outlined in the aspirations of Vision 2020.
