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World Tunnel Congress 2020 Ready for Digital Debut



BY TBM STAFF ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

INTERNATIONAL NEWS, NEWS

True to its commitment to innovation while embracing the “new norm,” the World Tunnel Congress 2020 will now be held fully digital, paving the way for tunneling academicians and industry players alike to be a part of the world’s greatest meeting of tunnelers, regardless of where they are.



Short for ITA-AITES World Tunnel Congress 2020, WTC 2020 was initially due to be held in September at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC). Recent circumstances set off by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to many cancellations of major events around the world and drove the need to move WTC 2020 into a digital platform as a result of global border control, restrictions on mass gathering and the requirement for physical distancing.

After much deliberation, the organizing associations — The Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM) and the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association (ITA-AITES) — decided to take the Congress virtual by streaming the programs on various dates from Sept. 11-17, 2020, via a secured digital platform.

WTC 2020 will kick start with opening speeches on Sept. 14 by industry giants such as long-time IEM backers, WTC 2020 Organising Chairman, Ir. Dr Teik Aun Ooi, IEM President Ir. Ong Ching Loon plus ITA President, Prof. Jenny Yan. Themed “Innovation and Sustainable Underground Serving Global Connectivity,” the Congress will feature up to 300 technical presentations and talks focusing on these areas.

The main highlight will be a cross-discipline initiative at WTC, a Landmark Lecture given by Professor Charles W. W. Ng, Chair Professor of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and also President of the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering. An illustrious speaker that has given keynote speeches worldwide, his talk on tunnel-to-tunnel and tunnel-to-pile foundation interactions is bound to liven the virtual Congress.

There will also be interactive sessions throughout as participants will get to pose their questions and engage with speakers and presenters. In fact, although now fully digital, WTC 2020 makes no compromise in what it offers, as there will still be up to 80 exhibitors present showcasing the latest in tunneling trends via a digital gallery, complete with attendants ready to attend to visitors to via chatrooms throughout the event.

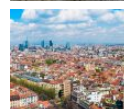
WTC 2020 will also feature two general assemblies at the end of the Congress, namely the ITA Young Members General Assembly and 46th ITA General Assembly.

WTC 2020 is a golden opportunity for the engineering fraternities in Malaysia as it brings their ingenuity and capacity in tunneling to a global stage. Malaysia’s tunneling icons include the 9.7-km, two-story SMART Tunnel, the longest dual function

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tunneling innovations such as the Variable Density Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) and the autonomous TBM.

Although the format of the Congress is now virtual, conference objectives will still be met if not exceeded as technology removes the geographical and physical limitations of knowledge transactions. While it is disheartening that the Congress could not be held physically in the beautiful city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia continues to wait for delegates everywhere, as we battle the Covid-19 pandemic in unison.

WTC 2020 is still open for registrations but filling up fast. For more details and updates on upcoming programs, check out the official homepage www.wtc2020.my. For Congress details please connect with Dr Ooi Teik Aun at drtaooi@gmail.com.

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