

VERBATIM TEXT

SPEECH BY

YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM

PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK (ICW) & BUILDXPO MALAYSIA 2026

10 NOVEMBER 2026 | 10.00 AM | MITEC, KUALA LUMPUR

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam Sejahtera.

1. *Alhamdulillah, tahniah atas kejayaan meneruskan minggu pembiinaan yang diselenggarakan oleh Kementerian Kerja Raya dengan Kerjasama Qube, CIDB dan rakan-rakan.*

2. *Saya ucap tahniah kepada Menteri, Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Alexander Nanta Linggi, Timbalan Menteri, Tan Sri Dr. Ir. Ahmad Tajuddin bin Ali dan seluruh tenaga yang menjayakannya.*

3. *Saya faham dalam pencanggahan jadual, pengaruh Menteri itu kuat dan passion dia terhadap pembangunan dan kerja di Kementerian Kerja Raya yang begitu kukuh. Saya tak dapat elak daripada menghadiri dan saya ucap terima kasih kepada beliau dan rakan-rakan di sini.*

4. *Terutama kerana tahun lalu, anjuran Minggu Pembinaan ini, bercanggah dengan lawatan Presiden Donald Trump Amerika Syarikat. Jadi oleh itu saya tidak dapat hadir. Jadi Alex bugurau dengan saya,* "Which one is the priority? The construction week or President Donald Trump's visit? Jadi, it's a difficult question for me to address, but finally I said both are important.

5. *Sepertimana yang disinggung tadi dalam ucapan rakan-rakan kita, industri pembinaan ini mencabar terutama dalam keadaan negara memacu pertumbuhan yang agak pantas. Kita bicarakan soal kepantasan projek, soal teknologinya, soal persekitarannya, dan juga soal keindahannya.*

6. *Jadi, kerana rakan-rakan sama ada dalam usaha pembinaan dan juga perancangannya, tentunya lebih berupaya melihat pembangunan ini bukan sekadar gedung-gedung yang dianggap gagah, tetapi disekalikan dengan beberapa faktor, teknologi dan kos dan keperluan semasa memelihara persekitaran dan keindahan.*

7. *Sebab itu, kita bicara soal pembangunan ini bukan sahaja soal bangunan, tetapi aspek-aspek yang sebenarnya diberi perhatian. Dan saya ucap tahniah kerana kementerian nampak tekun melihat aspek pembinaan ini sebagai aspek yang sangat kritikal bagi negara kita, terutama dalam keadaan di mana kita sedang pacu pertumbuhan yang sangat menggalakan.*

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Our event today both timely and significant because it provides impetus strengthening Malaysia's industrialised construction capabilities.

2. The Roadmap on modular construction needs to be supported by stronger domestic manufacturing capabilities, investment, market demand, skilled talent, and an enabling policy and regulatory environment.

3. They would encompass a broader spectrum that includes our concern for the quality of the material, the facade that must maintain its beauty and specter with indigenous touch, with concerns for the environment, which is now part and parcel of what a modern industry is all about.

4. Otherwise, is back to square one, the formation and building of concrete jungles which ignores the importance of quality and environment and also the concern and welfare of those society participates in the process.

5. So, it is therefore imperative that we develop an ecosystem in which Malaysian companies are not merely users of modular technology, but active participants in its development, production and commercialisation.

6. The transformation of our construction industry must ultimately translate into tangible benefits for the rakyat, not the least being affordable housing because otherwise there will continue to be disconnect with these gigantic mega projects and buildings which has no relevance to the welfare of the majority of our Rakyat.

7. And this of course very concerning as you see the frustrations being fought by many cities precisely because they've been largely ignored. Our focus is on development, which is correct. Our focus is on growth and construction, which is practical. But when we lack our understanding, our societal needs, we will only invite resentment.

8. And that is why I commend the Ministry, because in your crafting this growth agenda, you have not ignored this aspect, which is not only relevant to the select ministries, environment or economy, but it's part and parcel of our Madani economic framework.

9. For example, the Thirteenth Malaysia Plan, we set up a target of delivering 500,000 affordable homes by 2030, as part of the wider national aspiration of one million homes between 2026–2035.

10. Now, technology must help us deliver homes more efficiently, without compromising safety, quality and liveability and I would add, cost. That is why Alex knows precisely my new obsession that the tender process competitiveness must be retained. And this relates to the issue of governance, which people tend to be to ridicule and be a bit cynical without realizing the fact that if you manage the affairs of the state with greater transparency, observing the principles of governance, you can build more and assist more by not imposing on the government and the public sector unnecessary costs.

11. So, I am encouraged again by the strategic collaboration between CIDB and the private sector to advance modular construction in Malaysia.

12. Technology transfer, local industry development, skills training and stronger engagement with developers, contractors and stakeholders.These are key opportunities that must be exploited.

13. Effective partnerships must move beyond discussion and create opportunities for learning, testing, developing local capabilities and expanding market adoption.

14. So, I reiterate my profound appreciation to the efforts of the Ministry and the CIDB to explore a Three-Dimensional Concrete Printing technology. This initiative is particularly important because it demonstrates how Malaysia can move beyond technology adoption towards developing its own technological capabilities.

15. We want Malaysia to be a country that does not simply import and consume technology. This is not necessarily a new concept. I remember reading important text by, you know, development economist, from Samir Amin from Egypt to Malik Ben Nabi of Algeria, who talks about indigenization and indigenous technology. Yes, you must learn and adopt from the West and the East the best, but you must always remember it must fit to your own domestic national requirements.

16. And that's precisely why we fail in developing many of the cities. Cities, modern cities, not necessarily a construction industry, but it reflects also the issue of the entire planning and governance. But modern city is like any other city, Kuala Lumpur, is like London or New York, is to me is

absurd because different climate, different environment, different priorities and therefore you need different plans and strategies.

17. That is why we must develop the knowledge, talent and industrial capacity to adapt, manufacture and eventually export technologies that we have mastered.

18. These collaborations reflect an important principle: Government, industry and technology partners must work together to turn innovation into practical outcomes.

19. So, we must also ensure that our local contractors, so we must ensure that our local contractors, which includes particularly, I must emphasise, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, are not left behind in this transformation. They must have access to the knowledge, training, technology and business opportunities needed to participate in the new construction ecosystem.

20. And we must invest in our people. The construction workforce of the future will require new competencies in digital design, automation, advanced manufacturing, robotics and technology-enabled construction processes. And I think, this sort of exhibition and meetings somehow give such a focus and exposure that we share the strength

and particularly those within our region, in ASEAN and also our international partners. And I'm pleased here to see the participation, not only for our colleagues in ASEAN and the region, but also international partners, as far as the Gulf States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. Our universities, training institutions, industry players and government agencies must work together to prepare our workforce for these changing demands.

22. Ultimately, the success of this transformation should not be measured only by the number of technologies introduced or projects completed. It must also be measured by the capabilities we develop, the opportunities we create for local businesses, the quality of homes and infrastructure we deliver, and the value we contribute to the Malaysian economy.

23. I understand that Alex and the Secretary General is under tremendous pressure. Almost every cabinet meeting will say, “ look at construction” and now that river bank. And yesterday I was in Kuala Selangor. So every time that the

Works Ministry has to be the target, I don't have a choice because the speed and the demand, and the pressure.

24. So, I must thank you, Minister and your colleagues for having the patience and the tenacity to accept this and the capability to continue your hard work. Thank you very much.

25. So, let us build an industry that would continue to have the capacity to serve our people. And I think I would honour delegates and the opportunity to participate here to be able to contribute not only to the industry but the people we serve.

So, thank you again.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.