

# Boring lessons at tunnel training school

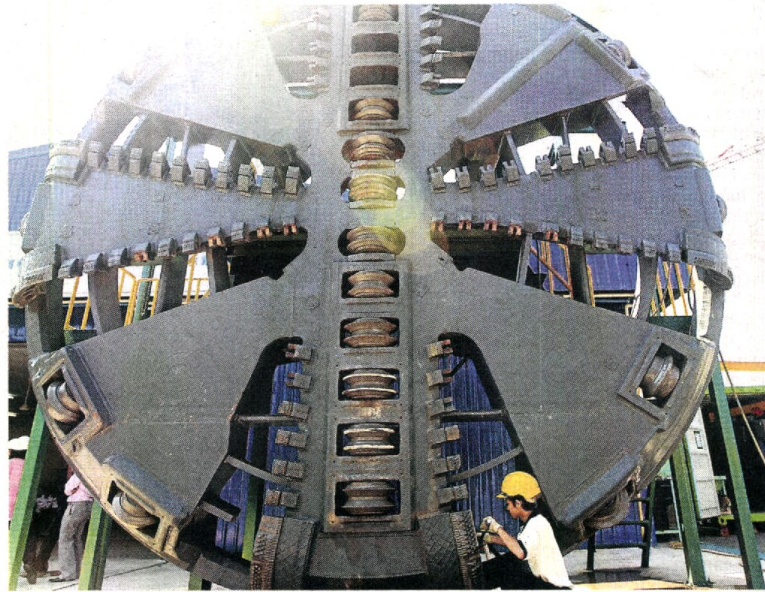
**DIGGING IN:** Recruits will be given training on the tunnelling process

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**H**IGHLY skilled tunnelling personnel can now be trained on home ground with the establishment of the Tunnel Training Academy (TTA).

The academy was set up by construction giant MMC-Gamuda KVMRT (T) Sdn Bhd with the primary goal of producing experts to help build the Sungei Buloh/Kajang Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project.

The MRT project, from Sungai Buloh to Kajang, stretching 51km has a 9.5km alignment running underground through the city centre.



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A trainee getting acquainted with the Tunnel Boring Machine. Pic by Rosela Ismail

# Academy to train 1,000 workers for MRT project



Trainees getting their hands dirty at the Tunnel Training Academy. Pic by Rosela Ismail

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TTA is the first training school in the world to upgrade the knowledge, skills and performance of workers in the tunnelling industry.

MMC-Gamuda KVMRT project director Satpal S. Bhogal said the immediate target of the TTA is to train 1,000 skilled workers for the MRT project by mid-2014.

He said there are three types of training offered at the TTA.

"The three programmes are skills, vocational and specialist training.

The skills training is for school leavers while the vocational training is for those with experience in mechanical engineering or other engineering fields.

"The specialist or advance training is for qualified engineers," he said.

Satpal added that all three programmes will be centred on the tunnelling process and the operations of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM).

He said that most of the recruits came from vocational institutions and government schools.

"We are still recruiting students here and we will be starting our recruitment drive in Sabah and Sarawak next month. We want to

encourage local workers to achieve their full potential in this industry," he said.

Satpal said the TTA was set up at a cost of RM10 million. He said in time the TTA will help reduce the dependency on foreign expertise.

"Our recruits are showing very good progress in their respective fields. Some have advanced to higher training courses and we hope to have our own pool of local expertise in the tunnelling industry soon."

MMC-Gamuda KVMRT Vincent Chow said 150 recruits have already completed the skills training since its inception last year.

"We are currently training 90 recruits in all three fields. The training will take from six weeks to three months," he said.

MMC-Gamuda KVMRT tunnel engineer Alvin Francis said, "The TTA has provided me with the essential tools to tackle the tunnelling project. I'm now training other recruits in material testing and management," he said.

His colleague Azlan Marzuki Shah Julaihi said, "The training has provided me with the knowledge on how the TBM works. The facility not only has simulators that show us how to operate the TBM, it is also fully equipped with facilities for data acquisition and analysis."