

# FIELD TESTING ON SOFT SOIL: ESTABLISHMENT OF RECESS MALAYSIA AS A REGIONAL TEST SITE

Mohd Idrus Hj Mohd Masirin<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Chitral Wijeyesekera<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Dr Hj Ismail Bakar<sup>3</sup>, Associate Prof. Ir Azizan Abdul Aziz<sup>4</sup>, Adnan Zainorabidin<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Parit Raja, 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia / Researcher in Civil Engineering, School of Computing & Technology, University of East London, United Kingdom (UEL)/ 0208-223-2116 (UEL)/0208-5488-707/ masirin@uel.ac.uk & idrus@UTHM.edu.my

<sup>2</sup>Reader in Civil Engineering, School of Computing & Technology, University of East London, United Kingdom (UEL)/0208-223-2537/ chitral@uel.ac.uk

<sup>3</sup>Head of RECESS MALAYSIA, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Parit Raja, 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia/ 0044-607-4536000/ bismail@UTHM.edu.my

<sup>4</sup>Director of Development, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Parit Raja, 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia/ 0044-607-4536000/ azizanaz@UTHM.edu.my

<sup>5</sup>Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Parit Raja, 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia/ 0044-607-4536000/ adnanz@UTHM.edu.my

**Abstract :** Field testing and/or full scale testing is widely used in many parts of the world. Small scale modelling usually fails to give researchers reliable and satisfactory results. The ambiguity of geotechnical factors on real site will give different results compared to small scale testing or laboratory based testing. With full scale testing, a full scale model will be able to be tested at real time and on the actual extreme ground condition such as soft soil environment. In Malaysia, a new research and development testing centre was planned and established to conduct on-site testing in a controlled environment similar to Bothkennar Soft Soil Test-site in Scotland, United Kingdom. It is called RECESS or Research Center for Soft Soil Malaysia inaugurated on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2003.

This paper outlines the needs for full-scale testing for engineering and environmental applications on a Malaysian soft soil environment. An overview of a pioneering project at a newly established soft soil centre in Malaysia acronymed RECESS (Research Center for Soft Soil) based in Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) is also presented. This project is aimed to understand the behaviour of soft soil when imposed to static and dynamic loadings during a 12 month continuous controlled testing periods.

Being a new R & D centre in the region, the pioneer project is crucial and the success is ensured with existing full support from the University and collaborative counterparts. The location of RECESS on a soft 20 meter soft soil foundation in rural part of Batu Pahat is suitable for full scale and industrial based experimental research. The idea of establishing RECESS was mooted to encourage the researchers in the South East Asian region to share their knowledge and create better geotechnical networking. RECESS will also be able to act as an R & D hub for the region similar to other research centres in the world.

**Keywords:** Full scale testing, RECESS, R & D Center, Soft Soil, UTHM, Malaysia, Bothkennar