

# 8<sup>th</sup> SEA Survey Congress opens

By James Kon

THE 8<sup>th</sup> South East Asia Survey Congress 2005 kick started yesterday morning with the opening ceremony attended by guest of honour, Pehin Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdullah, Minister of Development. The event was held at Songket Hall, Riqun International Hotel, The Mall.

Around 200 surveyors from over 30 countries gathered in Brunei Darussalam to attend the event and discuss the role of surveyors in society and sustainable development.

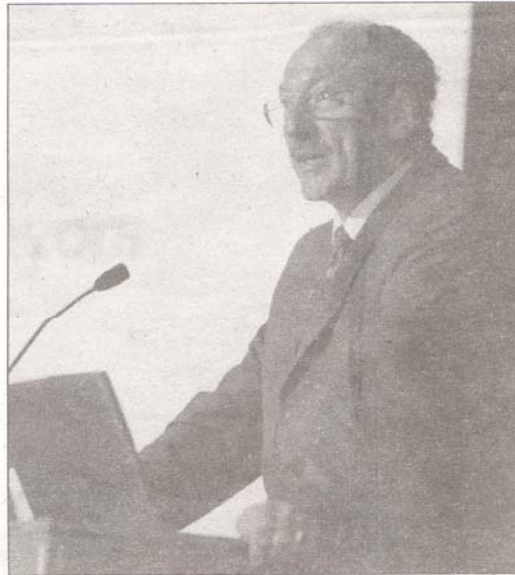
Also present at the ceremony were Dato Paduka Dr Haji Mat Suny bin Haji Mohd Hussein, Deputy Minister of Development and Pengiran Haji Matusin bin Pengiran Haji Matasan, chairperson of the organising committee.

The Minister of Development in his welcoming speech highlighted the importance of managing land for a sustainable development, which is in line with the congress's theme "Geomatics and the Community: Spatial Way to Sustainable Development".

He said land has always been recognised as a primary source of power, social status and wealth. It is the most significant provider of employment opportunities in rural areas. Access to water and other resources as well as to basic services such as sanitation and electricity, is often conditioned by access to and holding rights of a unit of land.

The management of land and resources is central to most societies and the critical issue is to find a balance between economic and environmental forces. Therefore, it is important to develop land policies that effectively and efficiently incorporate spatial data infrastructure, Pehin Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdullah said.

He added that creating a National Spatial Data



Keynote address by Prof Holger Magel

Infrastructure would underpin the relationship of people to land that allows for spatial information to be integrated and accessible within a complex digital environment.

In the keynote address by the President of International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), Prof Holger Magel, the surveyors need to follow changes with the trend of time was highlighted.

He outlined some of the strategies in attracting students to take up a career in surveying to help boost the profession, which is dwindling worldwide.

The Minister of Development then officiated the SEASC2005 exhibition by cutting the ribbon and proceeded to tour the exhibition booths.



The guest of honour cutting the ribbon to launch the exhibition