

Industry exposure

Nehemiah Walls everywhere, but what goes on behind these walls is as good a guess as yours and mine.

According to Sumitha Ganesharatnam, Head of the American Degree Transfer Programme (ADTP), what better way there is to expose students to the industry than to invite the experts from the industry to give talks?

"For this reason, we invited the Senior General Manager of Reinforced Soils Sdn. Bhd, Ir. Tan Cheng Chong to give an introduction to the concept of reinforced soils, a technology which is used in his company's patented Nehemiah Walls," she said.

Tan's one-hour lecture focused on the engineering concept behind these walls that one sees in highways and housing projects, covering principles, construction and applications of the Nehemiah Wall.

"Applications include retaining walls for commercial development, residential development, flyovers, bridge abutment and slope repairs, river wall and marine wall," he said.

The honeycomb-shaped concrete panels are prefabricated at the yard with good quality control, and provide maintenance-free and cost-effective retaining walls. "For a six-metre wall height, the saving is about 30 per cent compared to the conventional method of using reinforced concrete," he said.

Speed of construction is another important factor when using the concrete panels. "This is important especially when we are working on busy highways or doing restoration work on slopes that have failed due to a landslide," he said. "We can easily build 300 square metres of the retaining wall in one week."

A total of 20 Engineering Statistics students in their Second Year, including their lecturer, S. Selvaretnam, attended Tan's lecture.

"As a lecturer, I see such talks as relevant to students' appreciation of the industrial application of engineering knowledge. They learn how to apply what they study in my class," said Selvaretnam.

