

## A HISTORICAL MOMENT—NEWLY COMPLETED HSUEHSHAN TUNNEL HAS SHORTENED THE DISTANCE BETWEEN TAIPEI AND YI-LAN TO 30 MINUTES

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The Founder, Dr. Clement Chang and the President, Dr. Flora Chang of TKU were invited to the inauguration ceremony of the Hsuehshan (Snow Mountain) Tunnel at 10 a.m., June 16. Both of them and several premieres, former and current ones, together with other ministers and officials who had contributed to the completion of this project toasted to the long-anticipated tunnel open to traffic. It was a simple ceremony but it conjured up a great meaning to the Founder as it symbolized a realization of a 17 years old dream.

Hsuehshan Tunnel is the centerpiece of the Taipei-Yilan Freeway—a project that was started 17 years ago, when the Founder was the Minister of Transportation and Communications for Taiwan. His dedication to this project sprang from his love for Yi-lan County as he was born in a family that had been in Lo-Tong (of Yi-lan County) for at least three generations. He can recall vividly the story his father mentioned how inconvenient it was to travel from Lo-Tong to Taipei in those days. Since Lo-Tong was quite cut off from the major big cities in Taiwan, it was under-developed in its educational system. For instance, His father had to attend Tamkang High School in Tamsui as there were merely elementary schools in Lo-Tong, and the best way to get to Tamsui was to take the Tsao-ling Trail on foot. The journey alone would take three days. Later on with the completion of a direct railway link and coastal highway, it shortened the journey to 2 hours. Despite that, the isolation had had its toll on the local development as most young people had left the area in drove.

In view of this, Dr. Clement Chang had a dream to prosper Yi-lan, a dream of symbiosis, as he firmly believed that there were two ways to reach this. First, to build an express way to connect Yi-lan to major cities and the

second thing was to build a university in Yi-lan. The former can promote trade, while the latter ensures an ample supply of talents to local businesses and industries. To fulfill this dream, he had started a campaign to the government way before he became the Minister of Transport in 1989. And when he finally joined the cabinet, he pushed successfully for the construction of Taipei-Yilan Highway. The blue print for a university was also incubated at this time.

17 years later, this dream has eventually come true. Hsuehshan Tunnel, the world longest tunnel with two separate pathways (one for eastbound while the other for westbound traffic) and the Lanyang Campus are all up and running now—a fact that could not have pleased Dr. Clement Chang more. Lanyang Campus was finished and started to recruit students last year after some careful planning and minute execution of several ambitious operations to create an impressive campus sitting on Mt. Lin-mei with a spectacular view. This year it will be expanded from 4 departments to 8 departments and is expecting a full enrollment with the convenience of transportation, thanks to the Hsuehshan Tunnel. In other words, Lanyang Campus would not have existed had it not been for the Tunnel, and vice versa, according to the Founder. They need each other to grow and bring prosperity to Yi-lan County as well as Tamkang University.

Tamkang University will be able to enjoy a greater growth when it takes 45 minutes to get from Tamsui to Taipei Campus, whereas another 50 minutes from Taipei Campus to Lanyang. Such a distance will make management and co-operation among campuses fast and effective. Hence, the Founder asserts that with the help of Tamkang's fourth campus, which is the Cyber Campus, the integration of all campuses will be an urgent task in Tamkang's next stage of development that is also known as the Fourth Wave. The integration of all campuses means a unified way of running human resources, budget, academic activities, planning and facilities. Only through such a unified front, can TKU concentrate on all the necessary improvements to bring it to another peak.

Figure:

The Founder of TKU, Dr. Clement Chang (third from the left, the middle row) attended the inauguration ceremony of the Hsuehshan Tunnel, during which he and other governmental dignitaries toasted to the completion of an operation comparable to a David and Goliath' s scale.

