



# Research **NEWS**

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## Businesses, Authorities Urged To Prioritise Infrastructure Maintenance Following Recent Sinkhole Incident

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By Abdul Hamid A Rahman

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 25 (Bernama) -- The recent sinkhole incident in Jalan Masjid India here has underscored the urgent need for enhanced infrastructure maintenance by the business entities and authorities.

This incident, which raised significant safety concerns, highlights the critical importance of investing in preventive measures to protect lives and ensure the smooth functioning of business operations.

Malaysia Institute of Transport (MITRANS) director and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Associate Professor Dr Wan Mazlina Wan Mohamed said that it is necessary of a dedicated maintenance fund.

"Currently, Malaysia seems to prioritise new construction over the upkeep of existing infrastructure. In contrast, European countries routinely invest in summer maintenance projects to keep their infrastructure in optimal condition.

"A dedicated maintenance fund would ensure ongoing infrastructure stability and help prevent costly and safety disruptions," she told Bernama.

The associate professor said that preventive maintenance not only addresses minor issues before they become major problems but also extends the lifespan of infrastructure.

"Investing in preventive maintenance is crucial for protecting lives. Well-maintained infrastructure significantly reduces the risk of failures that could jeopardise public safety.

"Allocating funds for routine maintenance minimises operational business disruptions and contributes to overall safety," she added.

Wan Mazlina highlighted the role of data-driven decision-making in infrastructure management.

"Businesses and authorities must leverage data analytics to monitor infrastructure performance and make informed decisions about resource allocation. However, Malaysia's fragmented data collection and the reluctance of private companies to share information impede this process," she said.

Wan Mazlina said that establishing a comprehensive and integrated database could improve forecasting and planning, thereby reducing infrastructure-related issues and enhancing safety and efficiency

Yesterday, as reported by Bernama, Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil said that mapping utilities is crucial, to understand the underground situation, as many areas contain pipelines and electric cables that are sometimes inaccurately mapped by utility companies.

"I have received many complaints that during the development of projects, dredging work often reveals large TNB cables, for example, which were not indicated on the map. Hence, there is a need for collaboration with the Kuala Lumpur mayor to ensure that we not only have mapping on the surface but also utility mapping," he said.

To ensure the efficient use of maintenance funds, Wan Mazlina suggested implementing performance metrics to evaluate maintenance and upgrade projects.

"These metrics help ensure that resources are used effectively and that projects meet their objectives. For businesses, this translates to better infrastructure management and reduced risk of disruptions.

"More importantly, effective maintenance and performance evaluation can prevent incidents with serious safety implications, creating a safer environment for all," she concluded.

-- BERNAMA

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26 August 2024 | Bernama

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