

'Get geotechnical reports ready'

By **BAVANI M**
bavanim@thestar.com.my

KL mayor: Requirement necessary for safety, integrity of projects

SUBMITTING geotechnical reports is a mandatory requirement for all developments in Kuala Lumpur, says its mayor Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

"All projects – whether they involve housing, roads or are located near flood retention ponds – must have a geotechnical report," she told *StarMetro*.

"Previously, this was only requested for hillside and hilly terrain projects, but we can no longer take that for granted.

"We need to understand what lies beneath the (ground) surface," said Maimunah, adding that it was a measure aimed at ensuring safety and integrity of projects across the city.

"The reports don't have to be overly detailed; the extent depends on the location and type of project.

"This includes projects that are approved but have not been issued a development order (DO).

"I have instructed the City Planning Department director to review all such projects pending issuance of DO."

She advised all developers to get their geotechnical reports ready.

"For those seeking approval for planning permission but have yet to receive it, ensure



Wong: Standard practice to conduct soil investigation studies before development.

your report is prepared. Those with projects in the pipeline, start preparing your reports now," said Maimunah.

This move follows the tragic incident involving a female tourist from India who was swallowed by an 8m-deep sinkhole on Aug 23, while walking in Masjid India.

Institution of Engineers Malaysia president Prof Dr Jeffrey Chiang Choong Luin said such a requirement should have been mandatory from the outset, and asked, "Why was this



Maimunah (right) visiting the site of the Masjid India sinkhole. — Filepic

not a requirement?"

He added: "Both local authority and developers must agree that this is a serious matter.

"Don't forget that for public projects, the government is also the developer."

Wong Chee Fui, a specialist at the Department of Civil Engineering of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, agrees with Prof Chiang.

"It is standard practice to conduct soil investigation studies prior to construction for

any development.

"The soil investigation report, also known as geotechnical report, must be prepared and endorsed by a professional engineer with practising certificate (PEPC) registered with the Board of Engineers Malaysia."

"The report includes results from soil exploration, such as the soil boring test, as well as soil or rock samples that are sent for laboratory testing, analysis and reporting.

"This report is compiled and

submitted by a PEPC as the basis for designing foundations or earth structures as well as for project construction."

He added that the purpose of the soil investigation report was to provide data on soil and site characteristics and conditions.

Wong said the results of these reports formed the basis for foundation design for any building or structural works.

"The requirement for a soil investigation report or geotechnical report is common practice.

"I am unsure whether DBKL is imposing any additional requirements or specifications for the geotechnical report at this time," he said.

Save Kuala Lumpur (SKL) chairman Datuk M. Ali welcomed the move but said the geotechnical report was already a requirement.

"SKL is also advocating for a two-year moratorium on all future project approvals, including those which have been approved.

"For those given approval, lawmakers should consider retroactively passing the necessary Acts, a practice that has precedent in our Parliament.

"The mayor needs to take proactive steps to protect public interest," he said.