

# Fadillah: Find cost-effective solution to problematic soils

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**KUCHING:** Researchers, geotechnical engineers and professionals involved in the field of soft soil engineering are urged to work together to look for a more cost effective solution in dealing with problematic soils that make up 72 per cent of Sarawak's total land area.

With the high cost involved in treating these soils and the scarcity of land for housing and infrastructure development, especially in urban areas, Minister of Works Datuk Fadillah Yusof said engineers were now facing a dilemma in dealing with problematic soils in the state.

"Constructing roads over soft soil have always been a challenge

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Datuk Fadillah Yusof, Minister of Works

in Sarawak. The problem usually manifests itself at the post construction stage in the form of serious undulations and excessive settlements.

"As far as engineers are concerned, soft soils are problematic and if cost were not a concern, engineers would want to remove the soft soils and replace them with good materials, or carry out

extensive piling and other ground treatment works," he said at the 'Soft Soils Engineering International Conference 2013 (SEIC) Dinner and Cultural Night' here on Tuesday.

Hence, Fadillah urged experts in this field to come up with approaches and solutions to overcome such challenges in soft soil engineering.

"The relevant agencies and

bodies should be more proactive in research and development (R&D), ensuring quality of roads and buildings to confront public scrutinises and harshness of soft soil in our country," he said.

"If we could consolidate our effort, I believe we could achieve a breakthrough in solving the problem associated with soft soil more economically in the near future," he said and hoped to obtain feedback and detailed report on the methodology towards strengthening the construction industry as a whole through SEIC.

Also present were JKR director Zuraimi Sabki, UHTM vice-chancellor Prof Dato Dr Mohd Noh Dalimin and Unimas vice-chancellor Prof Dato Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi.