

# Call for transparency on Jalan Sultan soil test report

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CONFLICTING reports and incomplete information on the soil in Jalan Sultan, Kuala Lumpur where the Klang Valley MY Rapid Transit (KVMRT) rail alignment will be, has stakeholders in the area seeing red and demanding complete transparency on the matter.

At a recent press conference, civil engineer Loke Ching Chong said only the boring log report was released and there should be two other parts to a complete soil test report.

"There should be a lab test and expert analysis reports in addition to the one released. We want to know the whole truth about the tests," he said, adding that this was in accordance with the Prime Minister's instructions.

Loke, who is also committee deputy chairman of the Confucius Private School board, said they have



**Wants more information:** Loke showing photos of limestone formations at the press conference.

reasonable doubts about the type of soil formation, which contributes to the ground's stability in Jalan Sultan.

This is because previous reports had quoted Mass Rapid Transit

Corporation (MRT Corp) chief executive officer Azhar Abdul Hamid saying the area's soil was made of hard rock known as the Kenny Hills formation and would pose no problems for tunnelling.

However, an earlier report had quoted KVMRT project delivery partner MMC-Gamuda's geotechnical expert Dr Ooi Lean Hock saying Kuala Lumpur stood on unpredictable karstic limestone soil.

"Karstic limestone is highly irregular and could feature cavities that could be as small as a fist or large enough to fit several Boeing 747s. A surface bored hole is only able to tell the soil condition at that hole but a cavity could exist right next to it and never be discovered," Loke said.

He added that he had witnessed a structure sink three feet in mere

seconds after construction works on such soil within the city had punched through such a cavity filled with water.

He said they wanted to know all the measures being taken to prevent unwanted incidents.

"It is impossible for anyone to say they know 100% what is happening underground. As such, it is important that we know what preventive actions are being taken and the kind of monitoring process that will be in place throughout the project," he said.

Loke also raised concerns about the pressurised bentonite slurry that would be used together with the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) in the project.

"Should the works come across a small crack that reaches the surface, the bentonite could just rush up and cause damage," he said.

Also present at the press conference were Bukit Bintang MP Fong

Kui Lun, Kuala Lumpur Hawkers and Petty Traders Association vice-president Datuk Ang Say Tee, Preserve Jalan Sultan and Jalan Bukit Bintang (PJSJBB) chairman Stanley Yong and representatives of a few other buildings affected by the project.

PJSJBB spokesperson Judy Tan said the government agencies that had failed to turn up for the recent meeting they had organised, would be receiving the group's memorandum and questions soon.

"The documents will be sent out early this week and the recipients will be given a week to respond to our queries," she said.

Among the parties invited to the meeting and failed to send representatives were MRT Corp, Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD), Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), Tourism Ministry, the Prime Minister's Department and the Information, Communications and Culture Ministry.