

# Giving priority to maintaining infrastructure

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Funds and resources, provided by both the government and private sectors, go to waste when infrastructure and buildings have to be repaired due to improper planning, public abuse and lack of maintenance.

To create an awareness on the importance of maintaining such amenities, a national conference will be held here later this month to promote a good maintenance culture among Malaysians.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said the event would also introduce the framework for a National Policy on Good Asset Management.

An Institute for Good Asset Management for Asia and the Pacific, will also be launched at the conference, to be held at the Putrajaya IOI Palm Garden Resort on Sept 22 and 23.

Ong said the National Conference on Developing a Main-

tenance Culture was in response to a call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for Malaysians to change their mindset of having First World infrastructure but Third World maintenance.

The ministry is organising the conference with the Eastern Regional Organisation for Planning and Housing (Earoph) and the National Public Administration Institute.

About 450 people would be taking part in the conference, to be opened by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Ong said Malaysia needed a master plan or national policy on its physical assets and experts from abroad would speak at the conference on scientific technology developed in more advanced countries.

"Not many countries have a national policy on management of physical assets and we hope Malaysia will be one of the first.

"We can build anything but

we fail to maintain these.

"When something fails we continue to replace or build new ones.

"In the first place we design and build something without first thinking about how to maintain them.

"If we fail to maintain what we already have, the Government will have to spend more and more and in the long run, it would not be sustainable economically, socially and environmentally," he told reporters at his office here, yesterday.

He added that maintenance of assets should be taken into consideration from the drawing board to the physical completion.

For enquiries on the conference, contact the Earoph Secretariat at Level 4, Block K, Housing and Local Government Ministry, Pusat Bandar Damansara, 50644 Kuala Lumpur or call Vincent Michael Patrick at 03-2092 5217 or fax: 03-2092 4217 or e-mail [earoph@time.net.my](mailto:earoph@time.net.my).