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#### Local councils taken to task for delays in implementing decisions

MALACCA, Thurs. - The Cabinet is puzzled why many government decisions have not been implemented as speedily as they should by local authorities.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said this issue was raised at the Cabinet meeting yesterday.

"There are directives given from the top, but when it comes to implementation, they are either late or not implemented at all.

"There were times when a directive or circular was issued, the documents reached the local authorities one to two months later and in some cases they were not received at all," he said.

Citing road works as an example, Ong said a directive was issued by the Government to raise the level of the manholes after a road was resurfaced.

"But if you go around you still find manholes that have not been raised to the road's level and pose a danger to motorists and motorcyclists."

He said similarly with projects given to local councils through the ministry's allocation, some projects were implemented late although the developers had been identified.

"Local council presidents should realise that allocations must be used up, and that delays would result in late completion of projects.

"In some cases, after the allocations were given out, the local councils then decided to expand the projects further or add other things. My advice is build first, and when you want other things, apply again next time," he said.

Ong said this when opening the Consultative Committee for the Local Councils meeting here today.

Present were 40 local authority heads from various parts of the country.

On public toilets, Ong said despite the directive to clean them, their level of cleanliness left much to be desired.

He urged local council heads to be handson in their approach and be willing to go to the ground to check on the problems themselves.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would always bring a notebook to note down the things that are not right."