

Regular Maintenance of Slope is Vital, says Expert

“It is safe to stay above an anchored slope but regular maintenance is required to ensure the slope’s safety”, said engineer and geotechnical consultant, Dr Gue See Sew. Such slope would be safe if it was maintained every six months. An anchored slope is used for steep slopes that are strengthened by ground anchors in the rock or soil behind it. The anchors need to be re-stressed consistently to maintain the carrying capacity of the ground anchors. If the carrying capacity is reduced without re-stressing, the safety of the slope is reduced in time and may lead to landslides. Dr Gue, the former president of the Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) and Fellow of Academy of Sciences Malaysia, said anchored slopes were sometimes used at highways when there was a dedicated team to conduct the necessary maintenance. On the issue of the collapse of the wall in the Bukit Setiawangsa area, Dr Gue, who visited the site, said he did not attribute the cause of the landslide to a water drainage problem as water was flowing away from the slope. However, a detailed investigation should be conducted on the wall’s failure. According to the Chairman of IEM Geotechnical Engineering Technical Division, Liew Shaw Shong, if the areas with anchored slope had been designed with proper design practices and executed with good construction practices under supervision of a slope designer, there would not be a problem to build buildings or structures over it. However, the use of pre-stressing ground anchors for residential development was losing favour worldwide while it was discouraged by the local authorities due to the high maintenance needed.

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