

Use allocation to promote cycling

THE Selangor government has demonstrated very commendable and committed action in allocating RM200,000 to local councils that award contracts to build dedicated bicycle lanes by March 2018. This will surely spur the construction of 1,000 kilometres of bicycle lanes in the state by 2021.

It is fervently hoped that this financial allocation would be spent wisely and efficiently not only to build more bicycle lanes but also to encourage and educate the public to use the lanes.

There are already bicycle lanes in a few places but these are not being used fully by the public, unfortunately.

The reason could be because some of these lanes were built a while back but not much was done to inform the public about them.

The lanes could also have been used by other road users indiscriminately or for parking illegally, causing obstruction and leaving cyclists frustrated when using them.

Lack of maintenance on existing lanes is also a problem, as the damaged stretches are difficult to cycle on and also dangerous to the riders.

The financial allocation could be used by local councils to make the public aware of both the new and existing bicycle lanes and to encourage people to use them.

Organising frequent bike rides in areas with bicycle lanes would help to create awareness and



also encourage people to take up cycling.

Steps must also be taken to educate all road users on the proper use of the bicycle lanes. They must be told who are allowed on the lanes and the penalties that would be imposed due to wrong or illegal usage of the lanes.

Local councils must ensure there is strict enforcement and any infringement upon or illegal use of the lanes must be penalised.

Another way to spur the public to cycle and use the lanes, besides the "first mile and last mile" to get to public transport mode, is to encourage them to make cycling

part of their daily activities. For example, residents in housing areas could cycle to their local shops, eateries, malls, post office, gym and homes of friends or relatives. This would be easier as residents do not have to carry a folding bike on public transport.

Keep up with the incentives and provide more assistance to the councils, Selangor government. More cycling lanes coupled with encouragement and education and also enforcement can only bode well for the state and its citizens.

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