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PWD DIRECTED TO STUDY NEW HIGHWAY CONCEPT

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 6 (Bernama) -- Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu has directed the Public Works Department (PWD) to look into building bridges and tunnels in hilly areas when constructing roads and highways.

He said today that this "new thinking" which was discussed by the Cabinet recently, was necessary to safeguard the environment from too many hill levelling and tree felling activities.

He had asked the PWD to study how it could be implemented economically, he added.

"This is because erecting tunnels is a very costly affair," Samy Vellu, who is also MIC president, told reporters after chairing the party's Central Working Committee (CWC) meeting, here.

He was commenting on Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement earlier today that companies offered contracts to build roads in Malaysia would have to abide by conditions that they construct tunnels at appropriate areas to reduce damage to the environment.

The prime minister said even though the cost of building tunnels was quite high, they were necessary to protect the environment from too many hill-levelling and tree-felling activities.

Samy Vellu said the Kuala Lumpur-Kuantan-Kuala Terengganu highway would be constructed based on this concept. -- Bernama