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Safety

ASSOCIATION PROPOSES SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRE FOR NEW MOTORISTS

PULAU PINANG, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- The Association of Motorcycle and Scooter Assemblers and Distributors Malaysia (MASAAM) has proposed that the government set up a special training centre for motorists as a measure to curb road accidents.

Its chairman Syed Mohamed Aidid said today such centres in Singapore and Japan were found to be effective in teaching the theory and practice of safe driving.

The proposal would be discussed at length at the association's meeting in Kuala Lumpur after the festive holidays before being recommended to the government, he told a press conference here.

He hoped the proposal could be implemented early to help reduce road accidents and loss of lives, especially those of motorcyclists and pillion riders.

Aidid said the training centre in Singapore was run by full-time, trained personnel who paid special attention to various safety aspects, including cultivating high self-discipline.

Such training needed to be imposed on new motorists considering that the lessons learned at driving schools were too short and inadequate, he added.

He said the association was ready to cooperate with the authorities to make the centre a success and to review the driving test system if necessary.

What was important, he said, was the change in attitude among motorists not to gamble with their lives on the road.

Referring to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that motorcyclists and pillion riders accounted for the highest number of road fatalities, particularly during the festive season, Aidid advised motorcyclists to be more careful.

They should ensure their machines were in good running condition and wear reflective jackets as well as adopt a defensive riding approach, he said.

Up to May 1996, a total 7.2 million vehicles were registered throughout the country -- comprising 3.75 million motorcycles, 2.67 million private cars, 465,974 goods vehicles, 48,142 taxis, 37,233 buses, 9,234 hired cars and 215,644 other vehicles.

He expected the number of registered vehicles to reach 7.4 million by the end of this year. -- BERNAMA

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