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Bikers urged to control emotion and pride

Kamarul Yunus

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, launching a three-year safety campaign for motorcyclists yesterday, advised bikers not to let their pride and emotions override good judgment on the road.

A biker in his younger days, Dr Mahathir said most accidents involving motorcyclists were due to negligence, not the machines they rode or other people.

"Sometimes, (bikers) tend to get so carried away with their emotion and pride that they ride too fast and swerve in and out of other vehicles' path. This is not very safe," he said at the launching ceremony in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir said the campaign was mooted in the wake of an increase in the number of accidents and casualties involving motorcyclists in the country.

"Based on statistics, motorcyclists and pillion riders constitute a large percentage of road accidents and fatalities compared to other motorists and pedestrians," he said.

Dr Mahathir said bikers and their pillion riders are more vulnerable than other motorists, and more easily injured or even killed in accidents.

In view of this, he urged motorcyclists as well as other motorists to ride or drive their vehicles very carefully and to take precautions to avoid accidents.

He told reporters that although the Government had beefed up enforcement and introduced several laws and campaigns, the measures do not seem to be very effective in containing accident rates, especially among motorcyclists.

Earlier, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the Government hopes, through the campaign launched yesterday, to achieve the target set in 1990 to reduce the death rate due to road accidents to 30 per cent by 2000.

Dr Ling said accidents involving motorcyclists and pillion riders accounted for 33 per cent of the total number of accidents and 60 per cent of the total number of fatalities last year.

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