

20/11/1997

Ling to meet police over weaknesses in saman ekor system

Sufi Yusoff

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Following the increasing number of complaints on weaknesses in the traffic summons-by-post system, or better known as saman ekor, the Transport Ministry will meet the police soon to overcome this problem.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the matter was brought at the Cabinet meeting today.

"The Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad), who is also the Home Minister, has given me approval to speak to the police on this matter," he told reporters at his ministry.

Asked what would be discussed at the meeting, he said, measures to tackle the problem including avoiding the wrongful issuance of summonses to the public.

The minister, however, did not want to commit himself on the earliest date for the discussion.

Despite numerous complaints from the public, the police have refused to accede to calls for a review of the system, claiming that errors by traffic policemen were marginal compared to the number of summonses issued to offenders.

Transport Ministry parliamentary secretary Chor Chee Heung had recently admitted that up to 10,000 motorists had been issued summonses for offences which they did not commit.

In the latest call for a review of the system, Gerakan vice-president Datuk Dr Kang Ching Seng said today that the fact that "10,000 motorists could have been innocent victims of the system should not be taken lightly."

The system, unlike the normal practice of motorists being flagged down and issued summonses on the spot, involves a traffic policeman noting down the registration number of the vehicle of the offender, as he or she was driving.

But critics of the system say not every policeman has perfect vision, and that mistakes are bound to happen when factors like weather, time of the day and the number of vehicles are taken into account.

The Federal traffic police headquarters, while acknowledging there were problems in the implementation of the system, had offered to deal with each complaint on merit.

Dr Ling said he had received numerous complaints from the public on the traffic summons-by-post system.

"These mistakes had created chaos for the motorists who had been issued summonses for traffic offences which they did not commit or in vehicles which they did not own.

"I have also received complaints from members of political parties including my own," said Dr Ling, who is also the MCA president.

He said the discussion with the police would take into consideration the suggestions from the public.

Among others, the police have been urged to note down details such as the colour of vehicle spotted for traffic offences.

Meanwhile, Dr Ling said the Cabinet had agreed to step up co-operation in research areas with New Zealand, using facilities located in Antarctica.

"We will contact the New Zealand authorities to find out areas of research which could be done jointly," he added.

He added he would meet the various port authorities to see how they

could improve incentives to promote load handling and transshipment at Port Klang.

He briefed the Cabinet today on the progress of the load handling facility in Port Klang.

(END)