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No expressway toll rise next year: Samy Vellu

Kamarul Yunus

THERE will be no increase in toll rates along the North-South Expressway (NSE) and New Klang Valley Expressway (NKVE) for next year, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said.

"This was agreed by the Cabinet in its meeting last week. There will be no rise in toll rates next year due to the present economic problems in the country.

"Thus, the current rates will not be increased. This is a good new year message from the Cabinet," he told reporters after the launching of Total Transparent Project Management (TTPM) system in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Affifuddin Omar, who represented Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, launched the TTPM which was jointly produced by Daya Information Management Systems (DIMS) and Oracle Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

Samy Vellu declined to elaborate whether the Government will have to pay compensation to the two companies which were awarded the concession for the NSE and NKVE due to the decision not to increase the toll rates along the expressways.

"The Government last week decided not to allow Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan (Plus) and Expressway Lingkaran Tengah Sdn Bhd to increase the toll rates along the NSE and NKVE respectively, for next year.

However, he said the Government has asked the ministry to negotiate with the two companies on the future arrangement of the toll system, including the possibility of extending the concession period for Plus and Elite.

"Don't ask (about compensation). Our (Government) message is to tell the people that there will be no increase in toll rates next year because the Government feel the present economic situation does not warrant such rise in toll rate. "The Government has decided we should also talk to PLUS and Elite whether to extend the concession period or not.

"We don't know whether PLUS and Elite agreed to that. But we have already conveyed the message to the two companies.

"The question whether they accept or not does not arise.

"This (no increase in toll rates) was decided by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. For more details, we will discuss later," he added.

(END)