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Mahathir-Accidents

RECKLESSNESS THE CAUSE OF ACCIDENTS, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that recklessness of some roadusers is the cause of road accidents in the country.

Dr Mahathir, concerned over the increasing number of fatal accidents during festive seasons in the country, said that the roadusers themselves were to be blamed for some of the accidents which occurred.

"Don't blame the road (condition), don't blame the (roadworthiness of the) vehicles, blame themselves.

"We have warned them, we have reminded them to be cautious but they seem to throw caution to the wind," he told reporters after attending the MCA open house in conjunction with Chinese New Year here.

Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali spent about 30 minutes at the function. Also present were several leaders of the Barisan Nasional component parties and all MCA Cabinet ministers and deputy ministers.

Since the launch of "Ops Statik", the operations to ensure road safety during the double celebrations, a total of 118 people was reported to have died in 4,965 road accidents.

Figures up to yesterday show that 58 per cent of the victims were motorcyclists and their pillion riders.

Statistics also show that the number of deaths and the rate of accidents during the seven days' of operations have increased compared to last year when 103 deaths were reported in 4,200 accidents within the same period.

Dr Mahathir said that some roadusers became victims because of their own attitude.

"Even if we don't drive so fast, we can still reach our destination. But there is a tendency of some drivers to show off and this way, we become the victims," he said.

The Prime Minister advised those travelling to and from their hometowns for the double celebrations to be careful behind the wheels.

"I have given advice many times for them to be careful when behind the wheels. Just think of those waiting for our arrival, but we never arrive because of an accident, maybe a fatal one.

"It just so frustrating...they just refuse to listen. It's not the vehicles, it's the drivers' fault," he said.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said that although various measures had been taken to reduce the rate of accidents during festivities, there were still some roadusers who were reckless.

"Let's not turn a joyful occasion into a sad one. If we wish to return to our hometowns to be with our loved ones, ensure that we could be with them alive," said Dr Ling, who is MCA president, after the function. --

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