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New toll rates to start on March 1: Samy Vellu

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THE new toll rates at five highways in the country will be implemented on March 1, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu announced yesterday. An announcement on the new rates will be made before the implementation date, he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur after visiting alternative routes to the LDP provided by concession holder Lingkaran Trans Kota Sdn Bhd (Littrak).

The highways involved in the toll increase are the North-South Expressway, the Lebuhraya Damansara-Puchong (LDP), the Shah Alam Expressway (Kesas), the Kulim-Butterworth Expressway and the Projek Expressway Lingkaran Tengah (Elite).

Of the five, the Government had earlier announced rates for two highways.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad had earlier announced the revised toll rates for North-South Expressway, in which private car owners will have to pay an additional 0.74 sen per kilometre.

Effective March 1, motorists will have to pay 11.24 sen per kilometre on the 848km North-South Expressway compared with the 10.5 sen per kilometre they are paying now.

The Government also agreed to reduce the toll rates for the Damansara-Puchong Expressway (LDP) from RM1.50 to RM1 for cars.

The Minister also said the Government is looking into the possibility of building another alternative route which will enable motorists from the residential area of Seri Damansara to bypass the LDP Sungai Penchala Toll Plaza.

"If the new alternative road is built, residents need not access the LDP. The route will also link them with Sungai Penchala old road," he said.

Samy Vellu said the Government will have to spend another RM2 million for the Sri Damansara alternative road including cutting the hill slopes. "It is our responsibility to build an alternative route if necessary. In this matter we cannot satisfy all parties," he said quoted as saying. Littrak has so far spent RM6 million to build alternative routes for residents including overhead and underway bridges, widening and upgrading existing roads and, in some cases, building new ones.

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