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Samy-toll

MINISTER ANNOUNCES 10 PER CENT INCREASE FOR NORTH-SOUTH HIGHWAY TOLLS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 5 (Bernama) -- Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu announced today a 10 per cent increase on tolls for the North-South Highway from Jan 1, 2002.

"The cabinet has approved a 10 per cent increase every three years beginning next year for the North-South Highway," he said at a news conference at his office here.

With the increase, he said North-South Highway users would pay 12.36 sen per kilometre from 11.24 sen per kilometre, an increase of 1.12 sen per kilometre.

Samy Vellu said the increase was still lower compared to the previous agreed rate of 15.1 sen per kilometre which was later reviewed by the government.

He said the 10 per cent increase every three years would be applicable until 2010.

From 2005 to 2007, the new rate per kilometre will be 13.6 sen while from 2008 to 2010, 14.96 sen.

Samy Vellu said the tolls for the highway, under Projek Lebuhraya Utara-Selatan Berhad (PLUS)'s concession, was last increased in 1998.

The North-South Highway, also referred to as North-South Expressway, starts at Bukit Kayu Hitam in the north and ends in Johor Baharu, linking all major cities on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Constructed in phases over a period of seven years, it was officially opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Sept 8, 1994.

Under the concession agreement with PLUS, the toll increase should have reached 36 per cent, he said.

As such, he said as compensation to PLUS, the government would exempt the company interest payment for the RM1.65 billion loan given by the government as well as the corporate tax.

Some 464,000 vehicles used the over 800-kilometre highway daily, he said.

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