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Samy-Raya

ALL ROAD MAINTENANCE WORKS TO STOP UNTIL AFTER HARI RAYA

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 4 (Bernama) -- All road maintenance and tarring works will stop three days before Aidilfitri to prevent road accidents during the festive season, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said today.

He said the Public Works Department had also been directed to identify dangerous areas and take steps to make them safe for road users.

"We will also ensure that warnings are put up in all areas involved in maintenance works," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby here.

He said he had directed Public Works Director-General Tan Sri Zaini Omar to monitor the traffic situation and road condition on federal roads one and two.

The Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) had also been directed to monitor the situation at the North-South expressway, which is used by an estimated one million vehicles during the festive season, and to provide two helicopters for the purpose.

The MHA had also been asked to step up cooperation with the police and raise awareness among road users of the need to observe the speed limit along the expressway, he said.

Last year, 12,239 road accidents with 285 deaths occurred during the Aidil Fitri festive season, he added.

On the East Coast highway, Samy Vellu said it would only be opened when it was completed next year because although the road was ready now the tolling system and many other things were not.

On a proposal to limit the use of the highways by big lorries during the festive season, he said this was not possible because lorries also had rights and moreover, it would affect the transportation of goods.

Asked to comment on the additional allocations for the ministry under the Mid-term Review of the Eighth Malaysia Plan announced by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad last week, he said the ministry would get RM8.3 billion for road development and RM2.6 billion for water supply for 2004 and 2005.

Under the review, the ministry is to get an allocation of RM23.4 billion, an addition of RM5.4 billion from the original sum of RM18 billion for development of infrastructures and public facilities.

-- BERNAMA

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