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Chan-Motorcycles

MINISTRY WORKING ON DETAILS OF ROAD TAX ABOLITION FOR 150CC BIKES

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- The Transport Ministry will come up with details soon on the abolition of road tax for motorcycles below 150cc, Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy said today.

"We are currently working on the details. We have to find out how to keep tab on these motorcycles since they will not need to pay road tax," he told reporters after opening the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) Asia-Pacific Seafarers Regional Meeting and the ITF Asia-Pacific Regional Committee Meeting here.

Previously motorcycle owners were required to obtain their insurance cover note before they were issued a road tax. They were also required to produce the cover note on renewal of the road tax.

Through this the Road Transport Department (JPJ) and the police were able to obtain details of owners of the two-wheelers. This also made it easier to track errant motorcyclists who had not settled their road traffic summonses.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when tabling the Budget 2004 on Friday announced that road tax for motorcycles below 150 cc would be abolished.

With the abolition of the tax, a person could buy a motorcycle, below 150 cc, and ride it without registering it as long as he or she had a valid motorcycle licence.

"We are looking at the details now...we need some sort of mechanism to ensure we have records of them...,'he said.

On another note, Chan said his Ministry had no objection if Malaysia Airlines (MAS) wanted to raise the retirement age of air stewardess from the current 40 years.

"I have no objection if MAS wants to raise the retirement age of their air stewardesses. I feel 40 (years) is too early (to retire). I urge MAS to look into this seriously and extend the retirement age," he added.

Chan said this to reporters after MTUC president Senator Zainal Rampak raised the issue in his speech at the opening of the two meetings today. Zainal is also the chairman of the ITF Asia-Pacific Regional Committee.

Malaysia Airlines and the MAS Employees Union, with the backing of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress, had over the past year been haggling over the retirement age for air stewardess and to date both parties had not reached an amicable solution to the problem. Only the retirement age of air stewardess in MAS was at 40 while air-stewards were allowed to work until they hit 55 years.

Chan said even budget airlines like Air Asia did not require their air stewardesses to retire at 40 and in fact they only retired when they reached 55 years.

"They (MAS) should try to keep them, instead of asking them to retire at 40. It is a waste of resources as training an air-steward or stewardess is not easy. So why waste the energy and money to train them when they are required to retire at 40 years," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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