

Toll concessionaires raked in RM23.66b
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Toll collections have brought in RM23.66 billion for the 19 highway concessionaires in the country.

This amount is accounted since the introduction of the highway privatisation concept until last year, said Works Minister S Samy Vellu yesterday.

The minister added that the amount included toll collections on two bridges - the Penang bridge and the Malaysia-Singapore Second Crossing (Linkedua).

He said this in written answers to Teresa Kok (DAP-Seputeh) and Tan Kok Wai (DAP-Cheras) at the Dewan Rakyat.

Samy Vellu also revealed that until the end of last year, an average of RM41 million was spent to maintain all the highways and bridges.

In his reply, Samy Vellu also said that about RM5.9 billion was spent to build the North-South Highway and RM27.83 million was the monthly cost of maintaining it.

The 50-year concession period for that highway began in 1988.

Projek Lebuh raya Utara-Selatan (Plus), which runs the North-South Expressway, had also collected the largest amount since collection began in 1988 - raking in RM15.91 billion up to December last year.

He further said that the amount of toll collected for the Penang bridge was RM1.7 billion while that of the North-South Expressway Central Link (Elite) stood at RM1.05 billion.

The other concessionaires are Kesas Sdn Bhd (Kesas Highway), Grand Saga Sdn Bhd (Cheras-Kajang Expressway), MTD Capital Berhad (Kuala Lumpur-Karak Highway), Besraya (M) Sdn Bhd (Besraya Highway) and Lingkaran Trans Kota Sdn Bhd (Littrak Highway).

Lowest collection

According to Samy Vellu, the lowest toll collection was RM20 million at the North Klang Expressway, also called Shahpadu Expressway. Toll collection at this highway began in 1984 with the 25-year concession expiring in 2009.

This is believed to be the first time the government has provided an exhaustive list of the amounts collected by concessionaires since they began operations.

The government has been maintaining that its toll concession agreements were classified under the Official Secrets Act.

Recently the police called up several opposition leaders who revealed one such concession agreement.

Since then however Samy Vellu had agreed that he would get the cabinet's approval in disclosing toll concession agreements.

Critics have slammed these agreements, stating that they were lopsided and caused losses for the government in the payment of compensations.

A series of demonstrations have also been taking place since the beginning of the year to protest against the toll hike in five Klang Valley highways.

The government allowed the increase of toll rates from 20 to 60 per cent on the Damansara-Puchong Expressway, Shah Alam Expressway, Cheras-Kajang Expressway, Kuala Lumpur- Karak Expressway and the Guthrie Corridor Expressway from Jan 1.

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