

Make licences hard to get

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DRIVE HOME

safely



KEPALA BATAS: Stiffer conditions and tougher training courses – these are the measures the Prime Minister wants implemented for the issuance of driving licences.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said these measures should be introduced so that Malaysians would learn to drive carefully and courteously.

“The training for motorists to get their driver’s licence should be made more difficult. It must be so intensive that it will be difficult for them to get a licence.

“Some motorists claim they are skilful drivers, but they possess the wrong attitude. Their civic-mindedness must be enhanced,” he told reporters at his Hari Raya open house in Dewan Milenium here yesterday.

Those driving public vehicles, he added, must also be properly trained and better public transportation facilities should be made available.

He was asked to comment on the high number of fatalities recorded under *Ops Sikap IX* since Oct 27.

Abdullah said human factor was the main cause of these accidents.

“Every year such accidents happen here. I just do not understand why Malaysians allow themselves to be killed on the roads,” he said.

In **Pasir Mas**, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy said the mindset of motorists has to be changed to make them more safety-conscious if there was going to be a drop in road accidents.



EAGER GUESTS: An enthusiastic crowd waiting to greet Abdullah at his open house in Kepala Batas yesterday.

“But this will take years, up to a generation,” he said after inspecting the MCA’s preparations for the coming Pengkalan Pasir by-election.

Chan, who is MCA deputy president, said to ensure changes took root within one generation, the Government had embarked on a “3E” campaign, covering enforcement, engineering and education.

The most important of the 3Es was education, he said, noting that road safety values would be instilled in children as young as Year One pupils.

“If children know about road safety, they can advise their parents. We want to see this take place,” he said.

In **Kuala Lumpur**, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said road fatalities had gone up each year despite the Government spending more than RM224mil under the Eighth Malaysia Plan on federal roads.

He said 30% of those who died in accidents on major federal roads this year were motorcyclists and pillion riders.

Of the RM224mil spent, he added, RM126.7mil was used to build special motorcycle lanes along major federal roads.

Samy Velly said a total of 980,000 vehicles used the North-South Expressway on Friday, and more than 1.2

million were expected to use it today.

The death toll for *Ops Sikap IX* rose to 145 with 18 people killed in road accidents on Friday.

Friday’s operation also recorded 790 accidents throughout the country, bringing the total number of accidents in the first nine days of *Ops Sikap IX* to 8,218, nearly 13% (934 cases) more than the corresponding period last year.

Perak topped the list with 123 cases, followed by Johor (119), Selangor (118), Kedah (67) and Penang (52).



Student on way home dies – P5