

ACCIDENT NEAR MENORA TUNNEL

PM gives personal contribution to families of 5 crash victims

KUALA KANGSAR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob yesterday extended a personal donation to the families of five Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah (US-AS) students who died in an accident at Km245.2 of the North-South Expressway on Wednesday night.

The contribution was presented by the prime minister's political secretary, Datuk Syed Mohd Fazmi Sayid Mohamad, to the families at Casuarina Hotel Kuala Kangsar.

During the meeting, Syed Mohd Fazmi also conveyed the prime minister's condolences to the victims' family members and informed them that he was at-

tending the Asean-United States Special Summit in Washington.

"On this occasion, I would like to extend my condolences from the prime minister to the families of the victims involved in this accident.

"The prime minister has also ordered that immediate action be taken," he told reporters following the visit.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Special Functions) Datin Mastura Mohd Yazid, who is also Kuala Kangsar member of parliament, had earlier visited the victims' families.

She also handed over personal donations to the next of kin.

The five students were identi-



The prime minister's political secretary, Datuk Syed Mohd Fazmi Sayid Mohamad (left), speaking to family members of five Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah students who died in an accident at Km245.2 of the North-South Expressway, in Ipoh yesterday. PIC BY L. MANIMARAN

fied as Muhammad Nasrun Aidol Munir Akbar, 22, from Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor; Ahmad Naim Najmi Ahmad Hafizan, 21, from Cukai, Terengganu; Iqbal Hasnun Halimi, 23, from Senai, Johor; Muhammad Nabil Haikal Muhammad Fariz, 19, from Batu Caves, Selangor; and Ahmad Akmal Ahmad Mokhlis, 20, from Parit Buntar.

The five, all in one car, had left their campus in Kuala Kangsar to have dinner in Ipoh. En route back to Kuala Kangsar, their car had collided with two lorries along a stretch of the highway, which was undergoing road works just before lam.

State police chief Mior Fari-dalathrash Wahid had said the

Honda, which was behind a trailer, had slowed down after the stretch had narrowed into a single lane due to the road works.

However, another trailer behind them had failed to brake on time and rammed into the Honda, slamming it into the trailer in front.

The impact saw the Honda burst into flames, killing all five occupants.

Meanwhile, State Fire and Rescue Department Assistant Operations director, Muhamad Shahrizal Aris said 17 accidents with two deaths were recorded along Km231.4 to Km257.8 of the North-South Expressway.

He said the accidents, recorded between March last yesterday to

March this year, also involved 11 victims.

"Of the 17 accidents, 11 involved heavy vehicles, namely lorries or trailers, due to common factors, like skidding or catching fire," said Shahrizal.

"The accidents also involved cars and motorcycles. Two deaths were reported during the period involving lorry drivers."

Shahrizal said lack of easy access forced fire engines to make a U-turn before the Menora Tunnel at a distance of about 24km.

"We also face difficulties in terms of congestion which hampered efforts to arrive early at the crash site.

"There is also a lack of open water sources and fire hydrants."