

## **LAST INCREASE IN 2009 GOVT MULLING UP TO 30 PC HIKE IN EXPRESS BUS FARES MOVE IS TO HELP DRIVERS, OPERATORS**

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KUALA LUMPUR : The Transport Ministry is considering increasing express bus fares between 10 and 30 percent.

Its deputy minister, Datuk Kamarudin Jaffar, said the fares were last revised in 2009 with a 31 per cent increase.

The increase from 6.5 sen to 8.5 sen for each kilometre , plus a surcharge of 0.8 sen for each kilometre were applied in 2015, bringing the overall increase to 9.3 sen until today.

“The Ministry is considering a reasonable fare increase to help express bus operators, without burdening the passengers. We will make recommendations to the cabinet for consideration.”

He said this to a question from Datuk C.Sivarraajh (MIC – cameron Highlands ) on likely increase of express bus fares due to high operating costs at the Dewan Rakyat here yesterday.

Kamarudin said the fare hike could help improve the quality of express bus services and reduce the risk of road accidents.

“Drivers salaries are quite low; less than RM3,000 for basic salary and allowances. Long working hours that exceed eight hours a day could lead to a decline in the quality of bus driving,” he said in a reply to a supplementary question from Datuk Abdullah Sani Abdul Hamid (PKR-Kapar) on the government’s move to reduce the risk of accidents involving express buses.

He said Malaysian Bus Star Rating (MBSR) system would be introduced next year to help improve safety and the Quality.

Kamarudin said MBSR covered areas ,including management, safety standards, driving quality, service level and customers’ satisfaction.

Operators need to achieve at least three stars to operate. Those who demonstrate exceptional services in the areas of security, customer services and operations will be given a five-star rating.