

Road safety drives not having desired effects, says Deputy Transport Minister

PUTRAJAYA: Road safety campaigns in Malaysia have so far failed to reduce road accidents, said Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Ab Aziz Kaprawi. He said road crash rates continue to rise, with 960,569 cases and 7,000 deaths recorded last year.

“Road safety campaigns are organised every year, but we do not see a reduction in road accidents, instead, it continues to go up.

“To summarise, our campaigns are a failure, we have to admit that. And we have to take this seriously because we do not want the number of fatalities to reach 8,000 next year,” Ab Aziz said after launching the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims 2017.

Ab.Aziz said it was time for all stakeholder - both the Government and non-government organisations - to work together to come up with a holistic solution. Malaysia should look at campaigns organised in Sweden and other developed countries that managed to reduce the number of accidents and road deaths, he said.

“Sweden recorded only 263 road fatalities last year. The population of their country is 9.9 million, which means the rate of road deaths is 2.65 per 100,000 citizens.

“In Malaysia, the rate is 22.35 deaths per 100,000 people.

“On average, there are 20 deaths a day or one death every 78 minutes. This is a worrying statistic,” he said. Ab Aziz also singled out Singapore’s efforts to control the number of car ownerships as a factor.

“In Singapore, they make it difficult for people to own cars. Here in Malaysia, the number of new car registrations and new drivers continue to grow rapidly every year.

“Sometimes, one household has four or five cars,” he said.

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims in Malaysia is observed on Nov 20. Also present at the event were Road Safety Department director-general Datuk Rosli Isa, Road Transport Department director-general Datuk Shaharuddin Khalid and Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye.