

21 more offences in Kejara list

BENTONG: The Road Transport Department (JPJ) will add 21 more traffic offences under its Kejara demerit system by the end of this year. Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said the new offences under the system include using cellphones while driving, not wearing safety belts, drink driving, using the emergency lane, driving under the influence of narcotics and overloading by commercial vehicles.

“As of now, the demerit system only applies to speeding and beating the red light. “These new offences will be included once the upgrading of JPJ’s MySIKAP system is complete,” Liow said at Dataran Bentong after launching the 19th Yamaha Balik Kampung road safety campaign.

He also revealed that seven new Automated Enforcement System (AES) cameras to catch speedsters had been installed, four along the North-South Expressway (NSE) – 146.8km and 151.4km mark near Pagoh (Johor), 299.9km mark near Kampar (Perak), and 96.3km mark near Kuala Muda (Kedah).

The remaining three are at the 17km mark of the Gua Musang-Kuala Krai highway, as well as the 256.1km and 288.6km mark of the East Coast Expressway Phase 2.

“Our main aim is not to penalise motorists, but get them to slow down to ensure their safety. We want to save lives,” said Liow.

At the same time, he said the ministry would study the possibility of offering incentives to conscientious drivers in the form of awards or vehicle insurance premium rebates. Liow expressed concern over the high number of speeding and traffic light offences recorded by AES cameras.

In a two-month period from April 15 to June 18, 77,242 offences were recorded, 89% (68,830) of them for speeding, with Liow adding that the 375.9km mark of the NSE near Slim River, Perak, was a speeding “hotspot”.

Liow stressed that the 7,152 road fatalities last year were way too high for Malaysia, which has a population of around 31 million. “A majority of those killed (62.7%) were motorcyclists. We need to internalise road safety as a part of our culture as accidents lower the productivity of the country, and our calculations show we lose about RM9bil in productivity due to road accidents,” he said.

The road safety campaign was organised by Hong Leong Yamaha Motor Sdn Bhd (HLYM) and the Malaysian Motorcycle and Scooter Dealers Association (MMSDA). Together with Liow, HLYM managing director Datuk Jim Khor and MMSDA chairman Wee Hong gave out helmets and safety vests to motorcyclists.