

Liow: Too few belt up at the back

TOKYO: More Malaysian passengers should belt up in the back seats as a study shows few do so, said Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

He said a study by the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research (Miros) showed that only 7% to 9% of people belt up in the back seat.

He said this was despite the high rate of road deaths in the country, of which 6,674 died last year.

“Our road fatality rate is very high, and we have introduced many measures, including the back seat belt requirement.

“Unfortunately, adherence to the law is still very low,” he said here yesterday.

Liow, who is accompanying Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on a three-day official visit to Japan, said the Government had to constantly remind motorists on the need to belt up.

“This safety habit must be inculcated among Malaysian road-users the moment they get into their cars.

“We don’t want to just continue with punitive action. We must also strengthen our awareness programmes,” he said, adding that enforcement by both the police and the Road Transport Department was already ongoing.

“The law is already there. We just want to remind the public,” he said.

Liow was commenting on the possibility that the lack of seat belts could have contributed to the deaths of three members of a family along the DUKE Highway after they were flung out of their car in an accident early this month.

He said the ruling on the wearing of the back seat belt was made compulsory for the past one year.