

Liow lauds arms guidelines

THE Transport Ministry has lauded the decision to introduce new guidelines on the use of firearms for enforcement agencies.

Its minister, Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, was responding to Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali's announcement on Friday allowing enforcement officers to use their firearms if they felt their lives were in danger.

Liow said most enforcement agencies, including the Road Transport Department (RTD), had special task force units to handle criminals.

"These units are issued special (gun) licences to take down criminals. It is a high-risk job," he said after launching the Second Global Buddhist Congregation and World Buddhist Sangha Youth Summit here yesterday.

Liow said the guidelines would allow enforcement agencies to carry out their duties more effectively. "RTD officers have to handle tontos, especially when over-weight lorries are involved.

"We have also engaged the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to help us ensure that we have high-integrity task force units who can stop them." Tontos are informers hired by illegal lorry operators to monitor the movements of enforcement officers and alert lorry operators of raids or roadblocks.

They have been known to attack enforcement officers. Liow urged law enforcement officers to abide by the law and not to misuse their firearms.

The Guidelines on the Use of Firearms (while on duty) 2017 were formulated following the death of a female Customs officer whose vehicle was rammed by a tonto in Kelantan while she was on duty last year.

According to Apandi, the incident occurred due to a lack of knowledge on firearms usage procedures among on-duty enforcement officers.

Previous guidelines under the Firearms Act 1971 only- emphasised how to store firearms, but did not include operational procedures. On another matter, Liow, who is Bentong member of parliament, said he would look into claims that illegal logging was taking place in the constituency.