

Trucks, buses to go digital by 2020

SERI KEMBANGAN: Trucks and buses will be required to go digital by installing navigation tools and closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras by 2020. Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Kaprawi said a ruling would be legislated to regulate and reduce risks of commercial vehicles in the wake of the rising accident rate in Malaysia.

He said the ruling proposed by the Road Transport Department would apply to new vehicles. He said older vehicles that did not comply with such safety requirements would be phased out by 2020 or declared not fit for road use when the law came into effect.

“The issue is costs. But, it is inevitable as it is a safety issue. We want to reduce accidents. We don’t want people to be scared of taking buses.” Aziz travelled by bus to the Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Expo (MCVE) 2017 here yesterday.

He said such systems allowed authorities some measure of control over drivers and operators as it ensured that rules were followed.

The ministry will be grading the vehicles using a star rating system, which can be used to advertise their services, in order to encourage operators to adopt the technology.

Aziz was referring to the accident rate where 7,152 people died in road mishaps last year, a jump from 6,706 deaths the year before. Public Transport Users Association president Ajit Johl said the non-governmental organisation supported the move. “It would be better if the government passes the law immediately as it would encourage the use of public transport.”

Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Lorry Operators Association secretary-general Alvin Chong said the move was unnecessary as most haulier and bus companies already had safety systems installed.