

# Foreigners **without** valid licence using rental service

■ BY **SIVANISVARRY MORHAN**  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Rental car providers in Kapar are flouting the law by allowing foreigners to rent and drive vehicles without a valid Malaysian driving licence.

This was confirmed to *theSun* by a rental car company which preferred to remain anonymous. However, its sales representative who wanted to be known as Irene, said most of its customers are foreigners without valid driving licences.

"If the customer is local, we rent out a Perodua Myvi 1.3 2018 edition at RM25 per hour, but we charge foreigners RM40 per hour for the same vehicle, take a security deposit of RM100, and keep a copy of their passport."

She said the price difference and other requirements are due to the added risk and possible legal issues associated with renting vehicles to foreigners.

The company also keeps a copy of the UN High Commission for Refugee identity cards when renting to refugees and asylum seekers. However, she said it is rare

➤ Authorities monitoring issue, while expert says errant car providers could face potential lawsuits if these drivers cause road crashes

for her company to rent vehicles to refugees due to various complications which she declined to reveal.

"Legally, foreigners are allowed to drive in Malaysia for only 90 days on a foreign or international driving licence, after which they must have a valid Malaysian licence."

In May, the Road Transport Department said it would conduct undercover operations to identify individuals renting vehicles to foreigners without valid driving licences.

Its senior enforcement director Muhammad Kifli Ma Hassan said that during an operation its officers identified a vehicle being driven by a foreigner without a valid driving licence.

Muhammad Kifli said the department would scan social media to identify those involved in

such activities.

"We will assign our staff to monitor social media for advertisements by rental car companies and pose as undercover clients," he said.

Telemarketer Balqis Abdul Wafi, 28, said she was traumatised by an incident about two weeks ago when a car swerved into her lane and hit her vehicle when she was driving home to Klang from Subang Jaya.

"The driver, a Pakistani national, admitted he did not have a Malaysian driving licence and that the car he drove was rented.

"He also refused to report the crash to the authorities.

"I insisted he contact the rental company immediately to resolve the issue.

"The company, which is located in Cheras, sent a representative to a police station to lodge a report,

which facilitated the insurance coverage for the accident."

Balqis urged the authorities to look into the matter as these foreigners could cause more road crashes as they may be unfamiliar with local traffic regulations.

UPM Road Safety Research Centre Assoc Prof Dr Law Teik Hua warned that rental companies could suffer serious harm to their reputations if they rented vehicles to foreigners without valid Malaysian driving licences.

"Rental car companies could face potential lawsuits and other claims if these unqualified foreign drivers caused a road crash. Matters could also escalate if a death is involved."

Law said an individual needs to be at least 18 years old and have a valid full driving licence from his home country to drive legally in Malaysia for 90 days.

"It is also a good idea to have an international driving licence if foreigners plan to rent a car here."

He said the punishment for driving without a valid driving licence could be a fine of up to RM1,000 and/or three months' imprisonment.