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**A**S the person who answers for all the crunches at the first crash lab in South East Asia, it will be a matter of interest what Khairil Anwar Abu Kassim, 36, has chosen for an iron horse.

Having wrecked some 12 cars and having the data of their crash worthiness at his fingertips, one would expect the chairman of the Technical Committee of Asean NCAP and the development manager of NCAP for the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety and Research (Miros) PC3 in Ayer Molek, Malacca, to encase himself in the most crash-worthy vehicle in the market.

"I drive a Honda Stream," reveals Khairil, who bought the car in 2008, the very same year he joined Miros.

But lest this causes a posse to form at the Honda showrooms, Khairil is quick to point out that the purchase was made just before he signed on the dotted line. So why a Honda? The man just wanted to be ready for his first day at work. Brand new dream car, brand new suit, brand new suitcase, you know the story...

As the integrity code decrees, Khairil is not about to reveal ratings, not until the open day at PC3 which will be sometime in 2013 that is.

But since the first crash test conducted by Miros on an Alza in 2010, family car rules have seen a complete ban on having his children placed on anyone's lap, including his wife's and well-meaning relatives, when a vehicle is in motion.

In the slow motion video which showed the child dummy being crushed to death by its adult minder at a speed of only 30km/h, Khairil is spooked enough to insist either they sit in their child seats or it's no go.

"It's very hard when it comes to the elder relatives," says the amiable Khairil, who was roped into Miros while pursuing his Masters at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) where the current director-general of Miros, Prof Dr Wong Shaw Voon, was lecturing.

But he skirts the sensitive issue by bringing work footages from his workplace to family gatherings, confident that the visuals will do the job.

"We always tell our loved ones to



## The crash expert

be careful when they are on the road and leave it at that. But we are not specific about what we have to do to be careful," says Khairil, whose biggest challenge is getting his elderly relatives to buckle up before a drive.

In speaking about the true goal of PC3, Khairil points out that it is high time automobile manufacturers take a good look at safety features in their designs.

"Why should our lives be considered cheaper than a European's or a Westerner's?" queries Khairil of the higher safety standards observed

by manufacturers when it comes to catering to these markets but are disregarded in this region.

He waits for the day when safety features like air bags and electronic stability control, the latter which has been proven to have saved 70 per cent of lives in Japan and Europe, will become standards with car manufacturers.

And no, PC3 does not crash their cars for free.

"We have to buy them. Once the car is in, we call the manufacturers and tell them we are crashing their

"A car may look good externally after a crash but internally, there may be many faults. The parts may jam or the air bags fail to trigger. Ultimately, it raises the question of whether a manufacturer is able to live up to its promises. You may have a car with nine air bags but will they work when the time comes?"

**Khairil Anwar Abu Kassim**  
Chairman, Technical Committee  
of Asean NCAP Programme



car," says Khairil.

Manufacturers' reactions have ranged from enthusiasm to chagrin. One almost floored him when they revealed the very model that PC3 had bought was due for a facelift in the very same month. This means whatever tests PC3 will perform on the older model will not apply to the new one. At last, the crash lab had to resign themselves to the fact that the owners of the previous models would still be interested to see how their older patents would stand up to a smashing.

Top on the popular request list is to see how the Protons will fare in a collision. To satisfy the reader's curiosity, Khairil assures that all of Proton's models from the Waja onwards

have been proven in terms of crash worthiness.

The question of why most crash tests are done at 64km/h is an oft asked one.

"I have been asked why not crash the cars at 110km/h. Simple. If anyone is to crash at 100km/h and above, even a tank will not keep him safe," points out Khairil.

The fee to crash a car at PC3 is RM130,000 each.

In the United States, where there are many crash test labs, it costs about US\$3,000 (about RM9,000) to test an infant seat.

☐ To contact Miros PC3, log on to <http://www.miros.gov.my> or call 603-8924 9200 for more information.