

# Speed kills even on empty roads: Don

KUALA LUMPUR: Although the usual Aidilfitri exodus is most likely not happening this year, Malaysian drivers and motorists particularly must exercise caution when travelling this weekend as speed kills even on empty roads or when there is considerably less traffic.

Safe Kids Malaysia Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) executive director Associate Prof Dr Kulanthayan KC Mani, said this was evident as Malaysia's record of road accidents during the movement control order was still dismal. This was despite roads nationwide being practically deserted and traffic relatively sparse during the lockdown between March 18 and April 14.

Although the number of road accidents has dropped by 70 per cent, "this is not a good number," he said when appeared in

"The Nation Update," — Bernama TV's talk show aired over Astro Ch502 and hosted by Tehmina Kaoosji yesterday.

Established in 2011 as a member of Safe Kids Worldwide (SKW) and in partnership with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UPM, the Safe Kids Malaysia programme is dedicated to improving the lives of children through injury prevention.

"We were expecting close to 90 per cent but that did not happen because when there are fewer vehicles with more road space, they (motorists) tend to speed more," Kulanthayan said.

Although there will not be much of a Hari Raya exodus this year due to the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) in place, Kulanthayan, who is an advocate for road safety, said it was a common mis-

conception that clearer roads meant safer travel. The danger is that those who have permits to travel might allude to a false sense of security and throw caution to the wind, he said.

Although Malaysia was ranked third in Southeast Asia after Thailand and Vietnam in terms of the number of road accidents, it was nevertheless a dismal ranking since the other two countries have a considerably higher population of 70 million and 97 million respectively against Malaysia's 32 million.

Among the factors for the poor record was Malaysia's high vehicle population of 30 million against its 32 million populace, plus the large private ownership of vehicles compared with people using public transport. — Bernama