

# Research needed for road safety

## Experts: Everyone should do their part

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**PETALING JAYA:** Amid increasing traffic on highways, road safety experts are calling for operators to do more research on the safety of motorists, especially at toll plazas.

“These days, drivers need to weave through traffic when approaching toll plazas to ensure they are in the correct lane,” said Assoc Prof Dr Law Teik Hua, head of the Road Safety Research Centre of Universiti Putra Malaysia.

“At the same time, they also have to watch out for motorcyclists,” he added.

He said this came about following the many options to pay tolls, resulting in different lanes.

“The vulnerable vehicles are motorcycles. Highway operators should take more initiative to increase the safety of road users and not expect road traffic to just move along organically, without holding road operations to specifically focus on the safety of road users,” said Prof Law.

He pointed out that the authorities tend to hold big operations during festive occasions to ensure road users adhere to the law, but not during year-end holidays.

The government, he added, should also look into providing better public transport for long-distance travel.

Prof Law said there should be priority now on the 233km West Coast Expressway, an interstate controlled-access highway running along the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia.

The PLUS Expressway was built years ago to cater to traffic then, but the number of vehicles have since increased, he added.

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PLUS Malaysia Bhd had estimated that two million vehicles daily would be on the road during the Christmas weekend.

Alliance for Safe Community chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye advised motorists taking a long drive to ensure that they were well-rested prior to their journey.

“Take sufficient rests in between and take turns to drive, if that is possible. Do not speed, do not drive recklessly. It is better to be safe than sorry.

“Highway operators too should constantly monitor road conditions and intensify such efforts. Safety audits should be done so that problems can be identified in advance.

“To the authorities, please be fair and just. Be strict when there is such a need, such as ensuring those who misuse the emergency lanes are not let off,” he added.