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For safety's sake, reinstate ban on tinted windscreens

THE Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) is disappointed over the decision by Transport Minister Datuk Ong Tee Keat ordering the Road Transport Department (JPJ) to postpone operations to check tinted windscreens on vehicles. The operations were scheduled to begin on July 1 throughout the nation.

The reason behind the decision to halt checks on tinted vehicles is unacceptable.

The question remains as to why suggestions by various parties regarding this issue was not given priority or acted upon through the implementation of guidelines and regulations that prohibit the use of tinted windows on vehicles.

Probes by CAP revealed that a large number of cars in Penang are heavily tinted. CAP believes car accessories shops have assured these car owners that specific guidelines and regulations do not exist for the prohibition of such tinting.

There is no doubt that car windows protect the driver and passengers from the sun and filter out harmful ultraviolet rays, thus providing some extent of comfort throughout the journey.

However, claims by certain non-governmental bodies with ties to the car accessories industry is unacceptable, where it was stated that heavier tints on windows is in line with the problems faced due to global warming.

In reality, it is not a question of global warming or weather change, but rather it is the issue of safety which needs to be considered, as well as the dangers lying ahead should the Transport Ministry and JPJ continue to delay the ban on tinted vehicles.

Vehicles with dark tints on windows are more likely to experience collision from the back, as tinted windows block the forefront view of the driver in the back vehicle.

Tailing vehicles too are unable to apprehend obstructions on the road, and thus react late, often ending in collisions.

As stated in the Motored Vehicle Act 1991, car owners have to comply with a 70% light penetration rule for the front windscreen and 50% light penetration for the rear windscreen and side windows.

Currently, it is only compulsory for imported vehicles and luxury cars to be subjected to checks on tinted windows by Puspakom prior to registration.

CAP calls for the ministry and JPJ to implement the regulations with immediate effect and make such tests compulsory even for local vehicles.

The ban on tinted windscreens should be reinstated for safety comes first.

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