

Enforcement of child car seat ruling still lacking, says MMA

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Malaysia Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz

KUCHING (Oct 25): There has been no enforcement despite the existence of the ruling in Malaysia to use a child car seat when transporting newborns to children aged 12, which took effect in January 2020.

In pointing this out, the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz said it supports the Malaysian Paediatric Association's (MPA) emphasis on importance of child car seats in the prevention of child injuries, following recent reports of an incident where a child was thrown out of a moving car onto a busy main road.

"We urge all parents to prioritise safety of their children by ensuring that a child car seat is used when travelling with their child on board; even if the destination is covers a short distance," she said in a statement yesterday.

According to the finding of the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, child car seats are proven to reduce the risk for injury in a crash by 71 to 82 per cent for children, when compared with seat-belt use alone.

“In Malaysia, the Child Restraint System (CRS) regulation is gazetted by the Road Transport Department (JPJ) under the Road Transport Act 1978 – Motor Vehicles (Safety Seat-belts) (Amendment) Rules 2019.

“On Jan 1, 2020, the law was implemented for private vehicles. The rules state that the CRS used in Malaysia must comply to UNR (United Nations Regulation) standard (R44 or R129) and children must weigh less than 36kg, or with a height less than 136cm, or aged below 12 years old,” said Dr Azizan, citing Ministry of Transport data as the source.

She added that for this ruling to be effective, there must be some form of enforcement.

“For now, in the absence of a decision (on enforcement), the police could do their part by advising parents travelling with their young ones (newborns to children aged up to 12) to prioritise safety by using a child car seat,” she stressed.

“More awareness is also needed on MYCRS, a subsidy programme for the B40 (low-income) and M40 (medium-income) groups for the purchase of child safety seats sponsored by the government,” she added.

According to news reports, an incident occurred at Jalan Sultan Yahya Petra in Kota Bharu, Kelantan on Oct 17 this year, where a child was thrown out of a moving car that was making a U-turn at a traffic light intersection.

It is believed that the door on the rear left passenger side was not properly closed.

The incident was captured by the dashcam of another car, and the footage was widely shared on social media.

The recording also showed the small boy being hit by two cars after he fell out, but he managed to get up and a motorcyclist nearby was later seen carrying the child to safety.