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[Falsifying driving licence in Sabah at serious level](#)

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Kota Kinabalu: Driving licence falsification is more serious in Sabah and Sarawak compared to the issue of cloned cars and 'tonto' activities.

"This three main issues happen nationwide, however in Sabah and Sarawak, syndicates involved in falsifying the driving licence has reached a more serious level," said Road Transport Department (RTD) Director-General Datuk Seri Ismail Ahmad.

It was learnt that people end up getting cheated when they buy driving licences sold by the syndicate at RM300 and RM400 each, thinking that it is genuine only to find out that it is actually fake after being caught by enforcement officers.

Ismail said several individual arrests involving fake driving licences were previously made, however the department has now turned to a new approach, which is focused on tracking down the syndicate at its grassroots.

"We have set up an elite special taskforce to wipe out syndicates involved in 'tonto' activities, cloned cars and fake driving licence activities in the country.

"We are in the midst of identifying the syndicate and if any of our officers or personnel is involved but I cannot reveal much as investigations are still on-going," he said.

He also said that the department will expand its Ops Cantas Khas Tonto operation throughout the country in collaboration with the police based on different areas of enforcement of the RTD and the police.

"We will first go to states where tonto activities are known to be serious, before going to other states," he said, adding that the first phase will include Selangor, Perak and Negeri Sembilan.

"We have also expanded the operation to Sabah and Sarawak because we have received information of several tonto activities in both states, but it is not at a serious stage compared to states in the peninsula," he explained.

A total of 15 tontos (informers) were reported to have been arrested and 13 vehicles seized during the special operation carried out in the three peninsula states since April 26.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai in a media conference held at Putrajaya on May 3, said that these tonto syndicates serve as informers to lorry drivers and companies which run transport businesses and notify them of any enforcement and checks conducted by RTD.

"These lorry drivers usually carry excess weight, more than the permitted amount and some even drive without licences, and this could endanger lives on the road and also destroy roads," he was quoted as saying.

Liow also said the government loses around RM12 million annually in unpaid tax and was also forced to fork out RM100 million every year for road repairs.

On a different note, Ismail said they have introduced the JPJ Cadet programme to secondary schools to create road safety awareness at a young age.

The JPJ Cadet programme was introduced to 17 schools last year and the department aims to introduce it to another 200 schools in the country this year.

Apart from the JPJ Cadet programme, the department has also engaged civilians as its eyes and ears through its Skwad Muda 1JPJ programme.

Meanwhile, the department's 70th Anniversary celebration was made more merrier after it was recently awarded a five-star rating by the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit.

Also present were his Deputy Director-General (Management) Datuk Arifin Che Mat, Sabah RTD Director Shuhaili Mohd Taufek and Sabah Road Safety Department Director Herdianshah Abdul Karim among others.