

Dr M: Crime rate among Indons high

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said records show that the number of Indonesians involved in crime, especially violent crimes like armed robbery was very high compared to other communities.

He said, even if the number of those who came illegally was taken into consideration, the ratio between them and the number of criminal cases involving them was very high.

He said the last two incidents

in Nilai and Dengkil could not be construed as isolated cases.

"There were many other cases reported to us involving them, but all these while we had been treating them as normal criminal cases without considering their nationality," he told reporters after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting yesterday.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said the new regulations on immediate deportation would also cover unregistered Indonesian maids.

Asked if the Government's tough stand on the issue had

affected relations between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, Dr Mahathir said:

"What tarnished our relations is the violence perpetrated by these workers, not our actions. In fact, by rioting, they are making the Government and the locals feel very uneasy about their presence."

Commenting on a statement by a human rights group based in Indonesia that the migrant workers were pushed to act violently because of the brutality of Malaysian police, Dr Mahathir said:

"The force used by our police

is nothing. Their police are more brutal. These types of accusation should not have been made unless they know for a fact that is the truth, as it would only worsen the situation and create problems between our governments."

He said the Government would also conduct a proper study to identify the real need of foreign workers by local industries so that only the required number was allowed to come into the country.