

'Crime reports won't affect country's image'
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The Home Ministry today refuted claims that crime stories published on the front pages of local dailies could affect the country's image.

Its deputy minister Abu Seman Yusop said crime reports, including those on the disappearance of foreigners in the country, were isolated cases and would not affect the country's credibility to foreign investors.

"People's perceptions that Malaysia is not peaceful is misguided and I am confident it was caused by those with personal interests in the matter," he told the Dewan Rakyat today.

Abu Seman said this in response to a supplementary question from Mohd Nasir Ibrahim Fikri (BN-Kuala Nerus) who asked for clarification on whether crimes reported by the mass media would affect Malaysia's image to foreigners.

He said the statement could be supported by the overall crime index which had shown a 16 per cent drop in the past nine months.

Earlier, when replying to an original question from Mohd Nasir on the number of missing people recorded from 2005 to 2009, he said 56 per cent of the 12,841 people reported missing were located.

He said of the 7,184 people found, 96.9 per cent or 6,962 people were alive while 222 others or 3.1 per cent, were found dead.

Among factors leading to the disappearances, he said, were family conflicts, unapproved relationships, kidnapping, mental instability and cases involving locals accompanying their foreign boyfriends back to their home countries.

"Based on these factors, the police have carried out various initiatives to look for the missing people.

"This includes gathering personal data in a form called the Missing Person System 1, cooperating with family members to make announcements through the mass media, and reviewing unresolved cases every three months," he said.

He said the Home Ministry also implemented preventive measures such as working with the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry through the national social policy programme, conducting operations with schools and local authorities to curb truancy, as well as foster closer ties with non-governmental organisations and the corporate sector to seek missing persons.

- Bernama

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