

Bid to debate Johor crime rate
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Parliamentary Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang has given notice of motion to debate the recent spike in the crime rate in Johor, when the Dewan Rakyat sits on Thursday.

"The brutal robbery-cum gang rape (cases) in Johor Bahru have sparked a public outcry over police failure to control and reduce crime. It has left Malaysians feeling very unsafe in the streets and their homes," he told a press conference in the Parliament lobby today.

A public campaign against the crime wave, supported by DAP, has to date collected some 80,000 of the 100,000 signatures targeted, he said.

"It is an expression of frustration and despair that, despite repeated promises of a war against crime - whether by the prime minister and the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) - and of establishment of the independent police commission and increased allocations and salary revision for the police force, the crime index has worsened over the past three years," Lim said.

He said that unless crime in Johor Bahru and 'black areas' in the Klang Valley and Penang are curbed, foreign investment would be affected.

Over the past few weeks, a series of robbery and gang-rape cases occurring mainly along the highway and near petrol stations, has gripped Johor. Dozens of suspects were arrested last week.

"It is the capital of crime...the anti-crime campaign is not racial or political issue but a concern for all Malaysians.

"The police must not be deflected by some racist SMS to lose focus on the war against crime or penalise innocents like Suaram activists Nyam Kee Han and See Siew Mun. (They) must work in co-operation with NGOs and civil society to end the reign of terror caused by rampant crime and lawlessness in JB and Malaysia."

Nyam and See were arrested on Sunday for distributing pamphlets and refusing an order to disperse during a demonstration against crime, held outside the residence of Johor Menteri Besar Abdul Ghani Othman.

Lim also revealed that the Dewan Rakyat Speaker has rejected his motion to debate corruption allegations against Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharum and IGP Musa Hassan.

Early this month, political commentary website Malaysia Today carried a series of articles alleging that Musa had received RM2million in bribes through links with organised crime.

Angry villagers

In another press conference, PAS Youth chief Salahuddin Ayub said that a village in Negri Sembilan is to be demolished to make way for a highway.

Some 500 residents of Kg Abok have expressed anger over this. They are also upset that they have been classified as squatters although their village has existed for 57 years.

They have sent a memorandum to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to voice their grievances.

"This is unfair. The government should issue land grants to those living there," Salahuddin said.

The government acquired the site for the construction of the second phase of a highway in Seremban.

However, residents claimed that the highway would take up a only small section of the site currently occupied by the village.

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