

**Our perception of crime must change: Najib**  
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While the public was increasingly worried by the rise in crime, statistics however showed that the crime rate in Malaysia was far lower than Japan and Hong Kong, said Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today.

"Based on the statistics given by the police, it indicates that the crime rate in Malaysia is lower than Japan and Hong Kong.

"It is also just slightly higher than Singapore to the basis of per hundred thousand of population... but the perception of the public is not the case," said Najib at a press conference in Parliament after the economic council meeting.

"We understand that the police have been working seriously, but there are still matters that can be undertaken to improve the perception of the police, and measures can be taken to improve the confidence of the people on the police and the safety of the country," he added.

Najib also said that the high crime rate was one of the main issues discussed at the meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He added that the council had informed Inspector General Police Musa Hassan that Malaysians were hoping for the police to increase their efficiency.

"So we have to deal with the figures released... it has to be somehow be accepted and believable by the public.

"Secondly we have to increase the level of confidence of the people towards the role of the police," he said.

**Economic growth: Next year target is 2.5%**

The deputy premier also pointed out that the country was expected to show a GDP growth of five percent for 2008 if the fourth quarter achieved a growth of at least 1.4 percent.

"At the third quarter we achieved 4.7 percent, so if we get a minimum of 1.4 percent, we would have five percent growth," said Najib, who is also the Finance Minister.

According to a report in Bernama, the prime minister had argued that if the economy was to achieve at least 3.5 percent growth in the last quarter, Malaysia will show an overall growth of 5.5 percent this year.

"For next year we are still keeping to our goal to achieve 3.5 percent but that is determined by two important things... (firstly) the stimulus package must implemented effectively.

"Secondly, provided the external environment does not get much worst and if the situation occurs as expected than we can achieve 3.5 percent growth," he added.

### **Terrorist links unsubstantiated**

Meanwhile on another matter, Najib labelled as "unsubstantiated" on the claims that the terrorists who attacked in Mumbai last week had links with Malaysia following their use of a Malaysian address.

He said Malaysian police would ask for Interpol's assistance to get details on the allegation as reported by the Indian media.

"It's an unsubstantiated claim. We will contact Interpol for confirmation on the matter and we will issue a follow-up statement. As for now, there is no proof to the claim," he said.

The Indian media had reported that some of the militant gunmen involved in the rampage and siege in Mumbai had used a Malaysian address to rent an apartment unit in the populous city.

In the three-day attacks from Wednesday by the militants in 10 strategic locations in Mumbai, at least 195 people were killed and 295 others injured.

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