

Five Operational Thrusts That Can Fulfil Public Safety Aspirations
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Crime prevention and maintaining public order is one of the key performance indicators of good governance.

For this reason, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin is concerned that although the overall crime rate has gone down, based on official statistics, public perception is otherwise.

Muhyiddin fails to understand that people must not only be safe; people must also feel safe. No amount of statistics showing success in fighting crime will change public perception if people feel they can be attacked by criminals any time and still hear or see victims of crime.

There can only be public confidence that the government and Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) has maintained public order and security if the following 5 operational thrusts are implemented by PDRM:

1. full independence to fight crime free from political interference and control.
2. upholding transparency and accountability as well as fight corruption by setting the Independent Police Commission On Misconduct and Complaints (IPCMC).
3. immediate action whether in catching those culprits responsible or updating complainants of the progress of investigations on their police reports.
4. ensuring a visible police presence in crime hotspots where police on patrol are seen, heard and felt.
5. community policing with support from voluntary police patrols and installation of CCTVs.

The most important criteria for an effective police force is not to misuse them as a political tool to fix up political opponents but help police fight crime whether with resources or moral support.

The public wants police to act fairly and not adopt double-standards. If there is no public confidence in the police, any reduction in the crime rate will not change public perception.

That is why despite the overall crime rate dropping by 15% in 2010 compared to 2009 and dropping by a further 10% in the first four months of this year, people still do not feel safe from crime.

Even in Penang which recorded the highest reduction in crime index in 2010 of 27% and also double the drop in national crime rate for the first four months of the year, people still do not feel safe.

The state government is committed to making Penang safer with installation of CCTVs and voluntary community patrolling to assist the police. This requires commitment also in tackling small crimes that may lead to big crimes such as curbing Mat Rempits.

Muhyiddin will do well to set up the IPCMC amongst the 5 operational thrusts listed above and listen to the advice of former CID chief Mat Zain Ibrahim to fulfil the aspiration that

people are not only safe; people must also feel safe.

Something is very wrong when the IPCMC, considered the most crucial of the 125 recommendations made by Royal Commission to Enhance the Operation and Management of the Royal Malaysia Police in 2005, is not enforced.

The Deputy Prime Minister can professionalise the police force and restore public confidence in one stroke by establishing the IPCMC.

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