

Najib rolls out more bike patrols in bid for safer streets
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By Boo Su-Lyn

PETALING JAYA, March 30 — The government will deploy 1,000 more police motorcycles nationwide, doubling the thousand-strong patrol unit launched last December in efforts to make the streets safer, Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced today.

The prime minister said that the police motorcycle units (URB) have proven effective in cutting crime, pointing to a six per cent drop in the national crime rate in the first quarter against the same period last year.

“Do not be cynical towards the government,” said Najib at the police’s United Against Crime programme in Subang Jaya today.

“Do not be trapped in the polemic of statistics. It’s better if we appreciate today’s theme: United Against Crime,” he added.

Crime watchdog MyWatch accused the police last month of massaging the national crime statistics, claiming that cases of snatch theft and robbery without firearms as well as burglaries and house break-ins, were higher than the published crime index from January to October 2011.

MyWatch also insisted last January that the crime rate had gone up last year, pointing out that the overall vehicle thefts in the July-September period in 2012 had risen by 3.5 per cent, or an extra 624 cases, in comparison with the same period in 2011.

Last August, the police denied allegations that they had manipulated crime statistics.

Najib said today that under the first phase of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) from 2009 to 2012, the national crime rate dropped by 27 per cent while street crime fell by 39.7 per cent.

He also noted that the issue of crime was a top priority for urban dwellers.

“We hope that this signals the government’s commitment and seriousness in fighting and reducing crime to a minimal level,” said Najib.

As Election 2013 nears, women voters who comprise half of the 13.3-million strong electorate have also highlighted crime as an issue of concern.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar said in a speech at the same event earlier today that the URB have arrested 207 suspects as of March 20: 129 arrests in Selangor, 30 in Kuala Lumpur, 38 in Johor and 10 in Penang.

PDRM National Key Result Areas (NKRA) secretariat chairman Datuk Ayub Yaakob told reporters later today that the URB was focused on housing areas, especially on preventing house break-ins.

Putrajaya’s efficiency unit PEMANDU said last July that index crime in Malaysia dropped by 10.1 per cent from January to May last year compared to the same period in 2011.

Before that, PEMANDU also released figures to show that index crime had dropped by 11.1 per cent from 2010 to 2011, while street crime dipped 39.7 per cent in the same period.

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