

Najib: Public fear of crime needs tackling despite GTP successes
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KUALA LUMPUR, June 8 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak admitted today that his government still needs to allay public fear of crime, despite claiming his crime-fighting initiatives under the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) had achieved its targets.

The prime minister said although statistics have shown a continuous decline in crime rate, the government's priority was to create a peaceful and safe environment where Malaysians do not fear their safety.

"The government is aware that numbers are not the final measure, what is important is how each citizen feels and maybe it is a subjective matter.

"Freedom from fear of the possibility of crime happening is the main objective that we must achieve through vigorous efforts," he said after launching the United Against Crime Day at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre this afternoon.

He later added that steps to combat crime must be continuous, before noting the additional 3.1 percentage point drop in crime rate compared to the corresponding period last year.

Putrajaya has sought to address concerns over the crime rate and introduced crime-reduction as a National Key Result Area (NKRA), which the police and the government's efficiency unit Pemandu said has been successful in reducing crime.

The government also recently claimed that the national crime rate decreased by six per cent in the first quarter of this year.

It added that the overall crime rate had gone down by 27 per cent between 2009 and 2012, while street crime in the same period went down 39.7 per cent with more policemen on the ground.

But the ubiquity of crime reports, both in the news and shared in social media, have led to doubts over the veracity of the authorities' professed drop in crime.

Crime watchdog group MyWatch also accused the police in February of massaging the crime statistics, claiming 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.

The police have denied manipulating national crime figures.

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