

Improve security in suburbs, police told

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PUTRAJAYA: The Cabinet has directed the police to intensify security measures in certain areas in the wake of an increase in crimes, including snatch thefts, particularly in Kuala Lumpur.

The overall security situation in the country was discussed at its weekly meeting yesterday and the police have been asked to take more concrete action.

Home Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad said while the crime rate in the city and tourist areas had decreased due to successful programmes like the installation of CCTV cameras and police patrols, the situation in the suburbs must also be looked into.

Among those who raised the issue were Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin, who expressed concern about the number of snatch theft and robbery cases.

Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, who was asked about the



Radzi wants suburbs looked into

matter by reporters, said there must be more effort to prevent the loss of lives in crime.

"Not enough policemen or officers to patrol is no longer an excuse. We told them to have the officers and make sure that all streets in this country are safe," he said.

On Saturday night, Phang Kar Wei, a Tunku Abdul Rahman College student from Kampar, Perak, was robbed by two men and slashed with a parang in Taman Melati. At around the same time another student Lee Kean Yip, 18, was murdered in

Wangsa Maju.

The Cabinet extended its condolence to Lee's family.

Radzi said snatch thieves would face the full brunt of the law when amendments to tighten criminal laws under the Penal Code were gazetted.

Under the new Code, proposed by a parliamentary select committee, snatch thieves could face 14 years in jail from the current seven.

Snatch thefts will be categorised as robberies, not thefts, thereby allowing for heavier sentences to be meted out.

Punishment for robberies will also be standardised to a maximum of 14 years' jail. Prior to this, the maximum jail term depended on the time the offence was committed, with night robberies earning heavier sentences.

Sentul police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohd Rodzi Ismail said dadah addicts were believed to have murdered Lee and injured Phang.

He said they could have accosted the Tunku Abdul Rahman College students in the hope of robbing them.

A task force would be set up to investigate both incidents.

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