



### FORUM ON WESTERN CORRIDOR OF KLANG VALLEY

Menara Star, Cybertorium, Level 2  
7th Nov 2015 | 10am - 12:15pm

Admission is FREE

- Home
- News
- Business
- Sport
- Metro
- Tech
- Lifestyle
- Opinion
- Videos
- Property
- Jobs
- Autos
- More



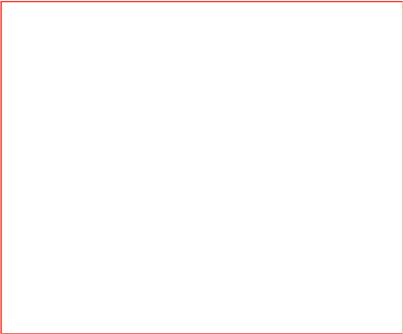
## Nation [Home > News > Nation](#)

Published: Sunday July 5, 2015 MYT 12:00:00 AM  
Updated: Sunday July 5, 2015 MYT 9:35:17 AM

# Do you care when crime occurs?

BY DR AMIN KHAN - PEMANDU REDUCING CRIME NKRA DIRECTOR

- FACEBOOK
- TWITTER
- GOOGLE+
- LINKEDIN
- EMAIL



ADVERTISEMENT



**THE STAR ONLINE**  
The Daily Alert

Get free daily email alerts on our top stories

Enter email

By clicking on the Subscribe button, it is deemed that you consent to the rules and terms set forth in the [Privacy Statement](#) as well as [Terms of Use](#) set forth by this site. Please take a moment to review the documents if you have not read them.

[View Sample](#)

I have written articles covering the different views of crime, the fear of crime and how reported crime statistics are derived.

The last article was about putting the brakes on car theft and in this article, I would be addressing two items – signals of crime and the way we react when crime happens in front of us.

In both cases, they represent the fabric of our society.

Some crimes such as snatch theft and house break-ins and disorders in our society influence the way we think, feel and act in relation to our own security.

These signals act as a dipstick of the risks and threats across our public space.

### Most Viewed

- [Malacca CM to Ali Tinju: 'Do not teach me my job'](#)
- ['We don't need defending'](#)
- [Man nabbed for killing parents with bomb](#)
- [Ali Tinju bows to pressure, calls off Malacca rally](#)
- [Rulers discuss judges and EC members appointments](#)
- [Cops want Jamal to call off Ampang rally](#)
- [Appeal for eye-witnesses in Subang Jaya hit-an-run accident](#)
- [Muhyiddin lauds Malay Rulers' proclamation on 1MDB](#)
- [Body of girl found near school where seven orang asli kids went missing](#)
- [Ling ready to take on Najib in court](#)

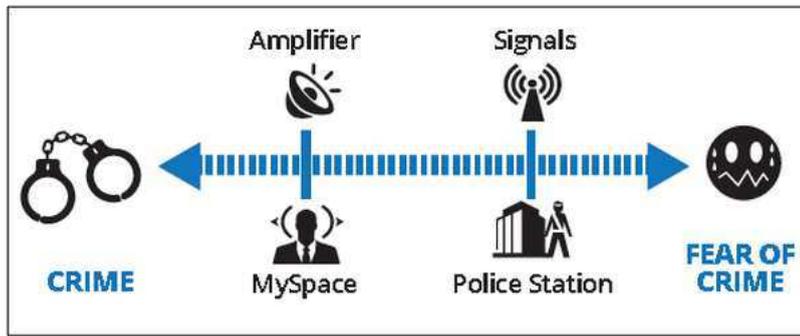


Figure 1

My aim in this article is to re-frame our understanding of how we think about crime and disorder in our public space.

When crime happens in the public space, do you care?

Hence, there are two parts to this article.

The first part focuses on “social control”; the second part addresses our togetherness like those days in the Kampung (known as “social cohesiveness”).

We all know that our stories and concerns on crimes are not the same as those of the police.

The police are focused on reducing recorded crime and they have in fact reduced crime index by 40% over the last five years.

On the other hand, our anxieties circle around the crime messages conveyed to us through the media and signals that we receive from the public space or environment.

These anxieties are translated into our fear of crime.

There are two signals that we get from the public space or environment – signs of physical disorder and social disorder.

These two disorders are signals that we see and perceive.

These signals, which we considered threatening, affect how we think, feel and behave. Examples of these signals are litter on the streets, *mat rempit*, drug addicts and so on.

They show the social and physical orders in our society that have broken down.

Research has established connections between disorder and both fear of crime and crime rates.

The visible evidence of disorder in the USA is known as “incivilities”, whereas in UK it is known as “anti social behaviour”.

In both cases, they signal the breakdown of the expected social control in our society.

In short, it covers any breach of prevalent norms and conventions that is disturbing or troubling to you and me.

The physical environment and the social behaviour (or misbehaviour) cause people to think that a particular area may be degenerating and that affect our quality of life.

They cause people to think about their own safety – whether to go for a stroll in the evening, let the children go out on their own to play or enjoy a meal at the sidewalk café.

The signals of crime are one of the four components (*Figure 1*) that are responsible for the gap between crime and fear of crime known as reality-perception gap.

The crime index came down over the last five years but the public felt that crime had gone up or remained constant; hence creating the gap between crime and

Golden Screen Cinemas

Facebook Twitter Instagram

NOW SHOWING SHOWTIMES HAPPENINGS

Latest News

At least ten Yemeni civilians killed in Dhamar province home

Singapore court dismisses Amos Yee's appeal against conviction and sentence

Thai military's plan for 'Great Firewall' risks Internet competition

Merkel slams east Europeans on refugees in private talk - Politico

Talks between Lebanese political rivals postponed on final day

Trending in Living

Refugee: 'I feel like I made a mistake to come to Europe'

Bear spits out human

Minute plastic problem could turn into major health problem

Giant sea sponges squeezing out coral

Things are turning sour for the crown-of-thorns starfish

Powered by star2.com

starproperty.my

Experienced property industry leader joins Yong Tai board

Eco-centric establishment for KL North

KL East – Defining liveability and sustainability in the capital

Sultan of Selangor launches Top Glove's new 23-storey building in Shah Alam

Applicants happy to get units in affordable homes project

fear of crime.

You may view the video on this on the UAC website

<http://www.unitedagainstcrime.com.my>.

In 1982, two social scientists advocated the Broken Windows theory. The theory states that maintaining and monitoring urban environment to prevent small crimes like vandalism helps to create an atmosphere of order and lawfulness, thereby preventing more serious crimes from happening.

The gist of the theory is as follows: "if the window is broken and left unrepaired, people walking by will conclude that no one cares and no one is in charge".

Broken windows send the signal that the community has accepted the neglect and disorder; the "broken window" display vulnerability and lack of defence.

It sends a signal that one can engage in criminal behaviour with little risk of detection.

The deterioration of community as a result of broken windows also modifies the way people behave – they tend to retreat into their own homes and further neglect the public space outside.

On the contrary, a clean and ordered environment sends the signal that the area is monitored and criminal behaviour is not tolerated; hence, there is good social control.

There are two forms of social control – the formal and informal.

Formal social controls are sanctions exercised by the government to prevent anti-social behaviour and chaos.

Many countries have adopted formal social controls to address disorders as shown in the examples below.

The New York police put the Broken Windows theory into action as early as 20 years ago.

They targeted graffiti and other forms of anti social behaviour extensively. They believed that small crimes could make way for larger crimes; if the petty criminal is overlooked, it is like giving tacit approval for him to do what he wants.

Our Sites

Share

More

UPDATED EVERY 5 MINUTES

property crime

dropped 63%, crime continued to drop for the following ten years after adopting the broken windows theory.

As the former mayor told the press in 1998, "Obviously murder and graffiti are two vastly different crimes.

But they are part of the same continuum and a climate that tolerates one is more likely to tolerate the other."

In Hong Kong and Singapore, there are stiff fines for littering, spitting in public and driving while drunk.

As mentioned earlier, besides formal social controls, there are informal social controls.

Informal social control refers to the actions brought about by individuals or groups to bring conformity to norms and laws.

These include peer and community pressure, bystander intervention in a crime and collective response such as Rukun Tetangga and Skim Rondaan Sukarela (SRS).

Informal social control usually has more effect on individuals because the social values are internalised.

The degree of informal social control depends on the social cohesiveness that we have.

The social cohesiveness among us in the *kampung* is stronger compared to the urban areas. Social cohesiveness is best described as the social glue that binds

ADVERTISEMENT

us together in the community.

In the urban areas, there is a gradual loss of social cohesiveness based on personal and long lasting relationships between neighbours and friends. We have become more self-centred to the extent we may not care even if a crime happens in front of our eyes.

We adopt the *tidak apa* attitude when it comes to helping others.

Let me share with you an incident that happened on a Saturday morning on 21 March this year at Oasis in Ara Damansara.

Four robbers mugged Fiqa Liyana Chong and her two friends after their car broke down.

One of her friends was severely beaten and received 17 stitches.

The robbers were armed with taser guns and motorcycle locks.

Although Fiqa and her friends shouted for help, passing motorists merely slowed down to look at them before driving off.

You can view Fiqa's story and a reenactment on the NGO, MARAH (Malaysians Against Rape, Assault and Snatch) website

<https://www.facebook.com/MARAH4safety> and on the UAC (United Against Crime) website <https://www.unitedagainstcrime.com.my>

In the particular episode above, the people passing by apparently did not care to stop or to horn their cars.

We have lost the sense of civic responsibility and hence the informal social control of our public space.

A community with strong social cohesion will pull together to intervene when there are signals of crime for the public good.

The social cohesion is important to bring down crime and the signals of crime. Research has shown that in neighbourhoods where social cohesion is strong, observed levels of disorder are low.

The rate of violence is also low regardless of demographic composition. In fact, an increase in one unit of community cohesion decreases crime by 3%. Informal social control brought about through social cohesion is found to be an inhibitor of crime and disorder.

Police Di Raja Malaysia (PDRM) has taken many initiatives to work with residents' associations, business community and non-government organisations. They have also established a Crime Prevention and Community Safety (CPCS) Department (or JPJJK in BM) to work more closely and effectively with the community. The intent is to engage the public to prevent crime.

At the same time, it builds a strong bond between the public and PDRM.

We need to rediscover and develop this social cohesiveness among us especially in the urban areas to bring down crime and the signals of crime.

Maybe it is good to ask yourself. Do you care to react when crime happens in front of you?

Do you care enough to help remove signals of crime? Do you report to the police of any suspicious character in your neighbourhoods?

You can view the videos on the MARAH and UAC websites of the four celebrities commenting on the incident that happened to Fiqa on 21 March.

The celebrities are Harith Iskandar, Jojo Struys, Daphne King and Gerard Singh. In short, it is our *tidak apa* attitude that is allowing crime to happen. Please view the videos on <https://www.facebook.com/MARAH4safety> or <https://www.unitedagainstcrime.com.my>

The foundation of an effective criminal justice system is our personal responsibility. Let us stand United Against Crime. Please do something when crime happens in front of you – horn your car, call the police or shout for

attention.

**RM4k Salary, Loan RM150k** ⓘ  
[ringgitplus.com/Citi-Personal-Loan](http://ringgitplus.com/Citi-Personal-Loan)  
 24 Hour Fast Approval. 7.9% Rate. Loan Up To 8x Salary. Apply Today!

TAGS / KEYWORDS:

Government, Crime



[f FACEBOOK](#)
[TWITTER](#)
[g+ GOOGLE+](#)
[in LINKEDIN](#)

### Related Stories

[Father of four still missing after being taken away by four 'cops'](#)



[Son rode past trailer mishap that killed dad](#)

[Sad end to supper outing for three friends](#)

[Rohingya jailed and fined RM10,000 for bribery](#)

[Mustapa to carry on with trial](#)

### You May Be Interested



[Three killed after car crashes into tree](#)



[14 finalists vie for Miss Universe Malaysia crown](#)



[Two men abuse Penang enforcement officer over...](#)



[Herbal drinks sell well during hazy days](#)



[No split in PKR, no new party, says Azmin](#)



[Ali Tinju bows to pressure, calls off Malacca rally](#)

### Others Also Read



[Kelabit land earmarked for sub-temperate farming](#)



[Start healthy with meatless Mondays](#)



[Putting kings will be Presidents champions - Nicklaus](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

SITE MAP

- Home
- Videos
- News
- Business
- Sport
- Metro
- Lifestyle
- Tech
- Opinion

SUBSCRIPTIONS

- The Star newspaper
- Other Publications
- RSS Feeds

OTHER EDITIONS

- ePaper
- Mobile

SMS SERVICES

MAGAZINES

- Kuntum
- Flavours

COMPANY INFO

- About Us
- Contact Us
- Job Opportunities
- Investor Relations
- FAQs

ADVERTISING

- View Our Rate Card

POLICIES

- Privacy Statement
- Terms of Use

OUR SITES

- Star2.com
- myStarjob.com
- Carsifu
- StarProperty.my
- Propwall
- iBilik
- Star SMEBiz
- R.AGE
- mStar
- Kuali
- Leaderonomics
- TheStarTV.com

SEARCH THE STAR ONLINE

CONNECT WITH US

Powered by

Content Partner

Our Radio Stations

Copyright © 1995-2015 Star Media Group Berhad (ROC 10894D)  
 (Formerly known as Star Publications (Malaysia) Berhad)