

ERA OF TRANSFORMATION IN ROYAL MALAYSIA POLICE: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi¹

ABSTRACT

Royal Malaysia Police, one of the most established institutions in Malaysia has come a long way to be a force to reckon with after 210 years of existence. Since its establishment in 1807, a number of notable achievements in the country are attributed to Royal Malaysia Police despite the challenges it constantly faced. The launch of the National Transformation Programme by the Government of Malaysia in 2000 came with the vision that Royal Malaysia Police will develop into a world class service-oriented police force by 2020. Initiatives were put in place to achieve this vision. From 2013 to 2017, the strong partnership and close working relationship between the Ministry of Home Affairs and Royal Malaysia Police has resulted in many transformational programmes. A few new and important legislations including POCA (2014), POTA (2015), SMATA (2015) and MBSAA (2017) were enacted with the aim to combat crime and terrorism. The setting up of elite task forces like STAFOC, STING and STAGG with more focused and assertive functions sends a strong message that the fight against crime and drugs is high on the agenda of Royal Malaysia Police. The success of these initiatives saw a significant 47% reduction in total index crime for the past six years and improved perception of safety as reflected in the crime indicator. Efforts will be continued to not only ensure a high level of peace and security in the country, but also an improved feel safe factor among citizens of Malaysia. More will be done to counter the challenge such that the safety perception tallies with the real situation.

Keywords: *National Transformation Programme (NTP); Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA); Royal Malaysia Police (RMP); perception of crime indicator; Transformation National (TN 50); Malaysia.*

¹ YAB Dato' Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is currently the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia cum Minister of Home Affairs (MOHA). He was appointed as Minister of Home Affairs in May 2013 and the appointment as Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia took effect on 28 July 2015.
Email: ahmadzahid@moha.gov.my.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Royal Malaysia Police (or *Polis Diraja Malaysia*, PDRM, in Malay) celebrated its 210th anniversary on 25 March 2017. The police force was officially established on 25 March 1807 with the issuance of the Charter of Justice in the state of Penang. It was a small force formed to safeguard the safety and security of some 10,000 population in the Prince of Wales Island (now Penang) (Hasbie and Lai, 2007). To date, the Royal Malaysia Police has metamorphosed into a centralized and modern enforcement agency with a strength of 116,429 personnel responsible for the law and order on land, sea and air of Malaysia and its populace of 32.5 million (PDRM, 2016; DOSM, 2017). As one of the most established institutions in the country, the Royal Malaysia Police has certainly come a long way with many notable successes despite the challenges throughout the 210 years of its existence. History has shown that over these years, the Royal Malaysia Police has been successfully protecting lives, safeguarding properties, and maintaining law and order of this country. It has also made significant contributions in safeguarding the regional and global security through the efforts in (i) defeating the communist insurgency through the signing of Hatyai Peace Accord in Thailand on 2 December 1989, and (ii) neutralizing the threats of international terrorism, which come in different forms (Zahid Hamidi, 2016).

As a leading enforcement agency under the purview of Ministry of Home Affairs, the main task of Royal Malaysia Police is to uphold the rule of law in order to maintain national security, peace and order in Malaysia as stipulated in the Police Act (1967). To maintain law and order, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Royal Malaysia Police are enforcing not less than 50 different laws and legislatives in this country (Attorney General's Chamber of Malaysia, 2016). This gives the Royal Malaysia Police a heavy responsibility in shouldering the task to protect life, property, maintain public order and rendering it a crucial enforcement agency. Thus, a close rapport and frequent collaboration between the Ministry of Home Affairs (Home Minister) and Royal Malaysia Police (in particular the Inspector-General of Police) is most important to achieve effective implementation of the country's policy in keeping the nation safe and maintaining peace.

The Government launched the National Transformation Programme (NTP) in 2010 as an effort to realise its vision to become a high-income nation by 2020 with good quality of life and a high national security level. Along with the NTP, Royal Malaysia Police is also envisioned to become a world class service-oriented police force in the maintenance of peace and security for Malaysia in 2020. In order to achieve its vision, one of the seven National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) enlisted in NTP is the NKRA in Reducing Crime spearheaded by the Home Minister with Royal Malaysia Police as the lead enforcement agency in the implementation of crime prevention measures. Collaborations with the other relevant agencies from across various ministries are mapped through the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) initiatives (Kim and Mouborgne, 2005; GTP, 2013; Zahid Hamidi, 2016).

The Government took a bold decision on 15 September 2011 to repeal all the prevention laws and lifted the Emergency Proclamations as part of the actions of the National Transformation Programme to transform Malaysia into a modern, moderate and progressive democratic nation that is on par with other developed countries in the world (Zahid Hamidi, 2017). Nevertheless, the aftermath of the lifting of the 1969 Emergency Proclamation saw the release of gang members from incarceration into the society. Many perpetrated into most of the serious and violent crimes including shooting, extortion and murders, resulting in negative public perception towards safety and security. Simultaneously since the year 2013, new challenges emerged from the rise of international terrorism in the name of Islamic State (IS) militancy or Daesh that has become the fastest growing threat to Malaysia and the international community at large (Zahid Hamidi, 2015). Complexity of the problem is compounded by other impending security issues such as drug abuse, illegal immigrants and human trafficking which are of transnational in nature. During these challenging times, new ideas that translate into effective practical actions are needed to maintain effectiveness of the programmes put in place to safeguard peace and security of the nation.

Against these backdrops, this paper seeks to elucidate the responses of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Royal Malaysia Police to the constantly changing security landscape and the geo-political uncertainty that compromises the security of Malaysia through the introduction of several new strategies and measures. The following sections deliberate the successes achieved and challenges faced by the

Royal Malaysia Police for the period between 2013 to 2017 in its transformation efforts. These efforts resulted in a significant reduction of crime rate, prevented happenings of physical terror attack in Malaysia, reduced the problem of human trafficking as documented in Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report 2017 on Malaysia, strengthened Malaysia's border security through the setting up of the new Malaysian Border Security Agency (MBSA), and enhanced human resources in Royal Malaysia Police. Last but not least, this paper concludes on the way forward after Vision 2020 to another level height, i.e. TN50 (*Transformasi Nasional 2050*), particularly in providing a high security landscape for Malaysia and its people.

2. METHODOLOGY

The narration in this article is derived from the author's professional experience and knowledge on security intelligence management and intelligence know-how accumulated from his service to the country in different capacities. These include the hands-on experience in handling security situations and the international exposure acquired during his previous appointment as the Minister of Defence from 2009-2013 and Minister of Home Affairs since May 2013, which contributes to the sections on the field of defence and national security in the later part of this paper. Inputs are also taken from some modules of procedure in managing security issues practised by the author, affectionately known as the "MOHA School of Management" among the ministry staff. Thus, the information used in this paper consists of both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are qualitative in nature. They are from the formal and informal dialogues and discussions with the enforcement team and officers of different ranks in the Malaysian Armed Forces and Royal Malaysia Police, as well as the author's experience, observation and expertise in security matters. Secondary information and data are obtained from publications, unclassified documents, articles, books and online research. These information and data are organized for descriptive, exploratory, comparative and analytical purposes in this paper.

3. OPS CANTAS KHAS AND 'NEW BREATH TO POCA'

The Malaysian Government took a bold step on 15 September 2011 to repeal three preventive laws, i.e. the Internal Security Act (ISA, 1960), Banishment Act (1959), and Restricted Residence Act (1933). All the emergency proclamations including the Sarawak Emergency Proclamation (1966), Emergency Proclamation (1969) and the Kelantan Emergency Proclamation (1977) were also lifted. These

decisions were made in line with the National Transformation Programme (NTP) launched in 2000 to transform Malaysia into a modern, moderate and progressive democratic country that is on the same standing with other developed countries. The effect of lifting of the Emergency Proclamations has resulted in the cessation of the Emergency Ordinance (EO). The grace period of six months allowed for execution and enforcement of all the preventive laws after the repeal ended on 29 June 2012.

A report received from Royal Malaysia Police revealed that by mid-year 2012, a total of 2615 criminal gangs and secret society members were released in batches from detention, following the lifting of the 1969 Emergency Proclamation. Those released were involved in crimes of violence and crimes involving fire arms. Their nefarious activities, almost on daily basis were widely reported in main stream media and cyber sphere, creating fear and anxiety among members of the public. This alarming situation, threaten the very foundation of security in the country, hence requiring immediate action by the Government.

In order to further step up security and restore public confidence, an emergency meeting on 17 August 2013 between the Ministry of Home Affairs with the Inspector-General of Police decided on launching an aggressive action oriented operation that was code named '*Ops Cantas Khas*'. The operation was a success with a significant 30% reduction in the number of violent crime cases in the first 52 days of its execution. '*Ops Cantas Khas*' has also successfully clamped down possession and trade of illegal firearms, a crime that has become increasingly serious.

An operation of this nature is necessary for its quick-win effects to restore public confidence as well as public order. At the same time, longer term solutions are needed. Laws need to be amended to further empower the Royal Malaysia Police to fight against violent crime and syndicated crime by assigning the police greater powers to investigate and detain suspected gang and secret society members. The first move was taken on 31 July 2013 with the proposal to tighten the existing security laws via amendment of the Prevention of Crime Act 1959 (POCA) and a review of the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code to support the crime-fighting efforts by the Royal Malaysia Police. Subsequent to that, a series of engagement through town hall meetings with all strata of the society including policy makers, educationists, enforcement officers, NGOs and civil society were carried out. Majority of the feedbacks were encouraging, and this lent support to the Government's decision to amend the Prevention of Crime Act 1959 as a major tool at the disposal of the police to fight crime (Zahid Hamidi, 2017).

The bill for POCA was tabled at the Parliament on 2 October 2013. It went through a lengthy debate which ended at 12.52 am on the following day, which means the deliberation took about 8 hours and 52 minutes to conclude (Zahid Hamidi, 2015). The act was then passed by the Parliament with the following four main amendments:

- i. Subsection 1(2) of the principle Act is amended by substituting the words “to Peninsular Malaysia only” with “throughout Malaysia”. The extension of the Act to Sabah and Sarawak shows the concern of the Government of the safety and security throughout the country;
- ii. The principle Act is amended to include “Special procedures relating to electronic monitoring device” as in Section 7a of POCA 2014 (Act A1459). The application of electronic monitoring device or EMD serves three purposes, i.e. to effectively monitor the movement of detainees, to inculcate the sense of deterrence among detainees and to reduce the cost of imprisonment;
- iii. The principle Act is amended to include “Prevention of Crime Board” as in Section 7b of POCA (2014), which shall consist of ‘a Chairman, who shall be or have been, or be qualified to be, a judge of the Federal Court, the Court of Appeal or a High Court and four other members, to be appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The establishment of Crime Prevention Board is to protect the rights of the detainees, thus to uphold justice of the system in dealing with crime; and
- iv. In Section 9 of the principle Act, the word “Minister” is substituted with the word “Board”. This amendment transfers the power of the Minister to the Prevention of Crime Board. In other words, the power of Minister in deciding actions on crime related matters covered under the Act has been reduced. This would prevent any possible abuse of power, or the perception of such abuse taking place.

The Prevention of Crime (Amendment and Extension) Act 2014 (Act A1459) was then gazetted on 25 October 2013 and came into effect on 1 April 2014. With the enactment of Act A1459, the Royal Malaysia Police is further empowered to investigate and remand suspected gang and secret societies members in their duty to fight against violent crime and syndicated crime. The establishment of the Prevention of Crime Board ensures check and balance to the execution of power provided under the Act by the police in their course of duty. The enactment of an

alternative legislation after the repeal of the earlier mentioned preventive laws within a short period of time to provide the necessary power for enforcement in performing the duty of the police is one of the achievements by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Royal Malaysia Police to safeguard peace and security.

How effective is POCA in crime prevention after 3 years of implementation? Is there any power abuse by the Enforcement Agency? Did any misjudgement by the Prevention of Crime Board happen? The public would want to know the answers to these pertinent questions. On this aspect, the Institute of Public Security of Malaysia (IPSOM) was tasked to collaborate with *Universiti Sains Malaysia* (USM) to carry out an empirical study on the 'Effectiveness of POCA in Preventing Violent Crime in Malaysia', and the project is currently underway.

4. ELITE TASK FORCES: STAFOC, STING AND STAGG

Drug abuse and crime are increasingly transnational in nature. The Royal Malaysia Police through the Narcotics Criminal Investigation Department (NCID) are working hard to combat the problem of drugs and drug abuse. In doing so, the police has to be more vigilant to plan and act ahead of the perpetrators, who are taking full advantage of ICT and its network. In a meeting between the Ministry of Home Affairs (Dato' Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Home Minister) and Royal Malaysia Police (Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar, Inspector-General of Police) on 22 August 2013, the formation of three elite task forces that are focused and specialised in combating targeted groups of perpetrators was decided. They are as follows:

- i. The first elite task force is known as the Special Task Force on Organised Crime (STAFOC) (or *Pasukan Petugas Khas Jenayah Terancang* in Malay). It was formed on 1 January 2014 with the main task of combating sophisticated and violent organised and syndicated crime;
- ii. The second elite task force, set up on 30 January 2014, is known as the Special Tactical and Intelligence Narcotics Group (STING) (or *Pasukan Khas Taktikal dan Perisikan Narkotik* in Malay). It is a task force specialised in fighting organised drug lords and kingpins as well as local and international drug smuggling syndicates in Malaysia. STING was formed to have a greater focus on syndicates which process drugs, and dealing with the source of drug problems in the country; and
- iii. The third elite task force is Special Task Force for Anti-Vice, Gambling and Gangsterism (STAGG) (or *Petugas Khas Anti-Maksiat, Perjudian*

dan Gengsterisme in Malay). It was established on 7 December 2014 as a specialized unit tasked to target local and international underworld groups and gambling syndicates. The elite groups and squads under the task force received specific trainings to inculcate expertise on crime and drug syndicate eradication down to the grassroots (PDRM, 2016).

The establishment of STAFOC, STING and STAGG has led to many successful operations by the Royal Malaysia Police. The successful raids by STING and STAFOC nationwide showed the commitment of the Royal Malaysia Police in eradicating crimes run by syndicates. Since formed, STING has dealt seriously with the problems of drug abuse and smuggling. The main role of STING includes identification of black spots for drug trafficking and preventing the entry of drugs via land, air and sea routes. The performances of STAFOC, STING and STAGG had earned praises for the Royal Malaysia Police and received support by the society at large (Bernama, 2014; Farik Zolkepli, 2014; Shamira Shahrudin, 2016).

As indicated earlier, the Home Minister leads the NKRA in Reducing Crime. With the various efforts of the Royal Malaysia Police mentioned above between the year 2010-2016, index crime has recorded a significant reduction of 47% for the past six years. In 2016, the crime rate registered a drop of 2.8%. Despite a significant reduction in index crime, the issue of safety perception of the public remains a challenge to the Royal Malaysia Police. The Perception of Crime Indicator (PCI) introduced in 2015 recorded a reduction in the fear of becoming a victim of crime among residents of Kuala Lumpur, signalling an improvement in the feel safe factor. From 80% in 2015, the indicator reduced by 19% to 61%. This reduction suggests that the endeavour of the police in addressing the most pressing concerns about crime and safety has been successful, as they embark on a more targeted approach to combating crime (NTP, 2016). Figure 1 shows a decline in the index crime in Malaysia for the period of 2010-2016. Property and violent crimes are also on a decline.

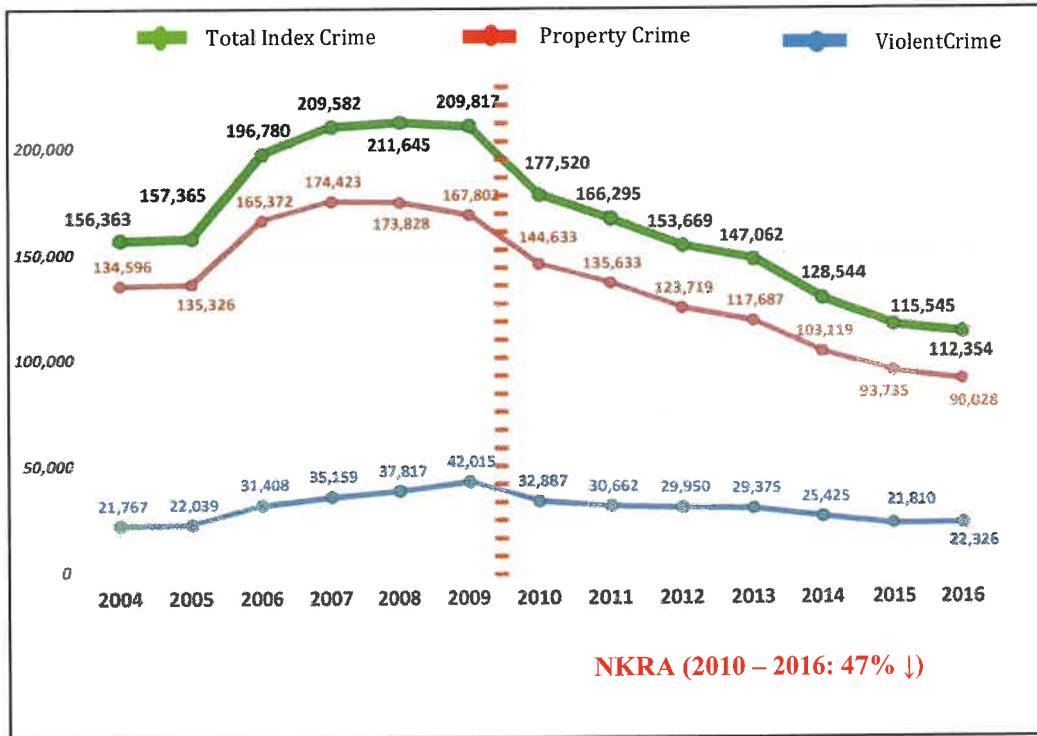


Figure 1: The Trend of Index Crime for Year 2010 – 2016 (Under NKRA in Reducing Crime)

Source: PDRM Laporan Tahunan (2016)

5. LEAVING NO SPACE FOR PHYSICAL TERROR ATTACKS

Malaysia, like many countries in the world, is facing dangerous threats from the Islamic State (IS) militancy or Daesh since its inception in 2013. The threat is real and lethal as a number of Malaysians were detected to have travelled to the conflict zones in Syria and Iraq, and some have returned to spread militant ideologies in the country. The principle of ‘prevention is better than cure’ is adopted in dealing with the problem, and no chance against such a threat can be taken. The pressing challenges require quick response and enactment of specific laws to deal with the threat of terrorism. The White Paper ‘Towards Handling the Threat of the Islamic State Militant Group’ was tabled by the Prime Minister Dato’ Seri Najib Abdul Razak on 26 November 2014 in the Parliament. Soon after that in 2015, two new legislatives, i.e. Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA 2015) and Special Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act (SMATA 2015) were enacted. SMATA 2015 was enacted to facilitate monitoring of the activities of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), which

is a new form of terrorism threat. The enactment of SMATA (2015) is consistent with the spirit and purpose of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (Zahid Hamidi, 2015). UNSCR 2178 requires member countries to formulate programmes to deal with returning foreign terrorist fighters. Under the provision of SMATA (2015), travel documents issued to Malaysian citizens who are involved in terrorist organisations listed in foreign countries or parts of foreign countries can be suspended or cancelled. This power is given to the Director-General of Immigration. The Act also empowers the Minister of Home Affairs to issue orders demanding travel documents of non-Malaysian citizens who are involved in terrorist activities of a foreign country to be handed to the police. The suspects can be detained up to 14 days for investigation.

The end to the threat of global terrorism (be that in a different form, known as a different name or perpetuated by a different player), if any, will be far away. In all likelihood, the threat will be there to stay. Laws that are comprehensive enough to prevent these elements from escaping legal action are needed. The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA 2012), the Prevention of Crime Act (POCA 2014), Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA 2015) and Special Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act (SMATA 2015) allow enforcement by the authorities to ensure that no individuals can be spared from facing legal action if they were involved in acts of violence. Malaysia's legal and regulatory framework in fighting terrorism has protected the country in so far as no single physical terror attack has happened on Malaysia's soil.

Not only has the Royal Malaysia Police increased enforcement, they have also stepped up the efficiency of the intelligence network and intensified collaboration with foreign counterparts. The Malaysian Police has successfully arrested 119 suspected terrorists in year 2016 compared to 82 arrestees in 2015. The increased number of arrests suggests presence of the threat that is getting more serious. They need to be taken off the streets, leaving these elements no chance to conduct any terror attack. The Royal Malaysia Police has successfully crippled 6 terror attack attempts by the suspected terrorists or sympathisers of terrorist (PDRM, 2016). The Malaysian Police's dedication and commitment to safeguard the country from any untoward incidents in Malaysia has received media's attention (Bernama, 2017 a, b, c, d or e). The violence or terror attacks happened in Brussels, Ankara, Paris, New York, Washington and London. In the South East Asia region, terror attacks took place in Bangkok, Jakarta, Marawi City of the Southern Philippines and even a foiled plot terror attack in Singapore (Zahid Hamidi, 2016). Malaysia has enjoyed peace and has been protected from such attacks compared to the other countries in the ASEAN region.

Another successful collaboration between the Ministry of Home Affairs, Royal Malaysia Police and Prison Department of Malaysia which has gone unnoticed is the deradicalisation and rehabilitation programme for the suspected terrorists and detainees. This is necessary because the war against terrorism cannot be won through force or punitive punishments alone. Those who are arrested by the police will undergo a special deradicalisation and rehabilitation programme in the detention centres, to neutralize their mind set, reintegrate them into the society and to avoid relapse. The success rate of deradicalisation among the detainees in Malaysia was 97.5% (Zahid Hamidi, 2016).

6. UPGRADING TIP REPORT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Of the organised crime, human trafficking is one of the most lucrative businesses to the underworld. There are many definitions of human trafficking. Codification of the term with a detailed meaning that is internationally accepted can be found in the Palermo Protocol (Saravanabavan, 2016). The offence involves illegal transport of victims by any means, and the crime usually involves cross-border movements. Such movements are typically relocation of victims for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation and other forms of organised crime. This category of crime has always been a concern for Malaysia's Government and particularly the Ministry of Home Affairs. Malaysia has always treated human trafficking as a crime against humanity. Malaysia was upgraded to Tier 2 according to the US Department of State's Annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report for 2017. The improvement in its tier reflects the Government's efforts in fighting human trafficking. Tier 2 is accorded to the countries that do not fully meet the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, but are taking considerable initiatives and steps that will improve the current condition in the direction that will comply with those standards. The minimum standard stipulated in the Palermo Protocol was passed in 2000. In the years before, Malaysia was in the Tier 2 watch list in 2015 and 2016, an upgrade from Tier 3 in 2014.

The improvement is a result of Malaysia's strong commitment and determination to battle human trafficking. Malaysia has legislated a law that criminalises human trafficking, that is, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act (ATIPSOM 2007). The definition of this criminal offence is in line with the definition in the United Nations Trafficking Protocol. In 2008, the Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants (Council for MAPO) was set up. In August 2016, the second series of the five years National Action Plan on Anti-Trafficking in Persons 2016-2020 (NAP TIP 2016-2020) was

launched. This is a continuation of the inaugural plan that was released in 2010. This action plan charts the broad directions and guidelines for combating human trafficking. It acts as a reference to guide the ministries, government agencies and non-governmental organisations in planning their efforts to fight against human trafficking. The protection measures for victims of human trafficking covering the aspects of healthcare, food and legal support are provided for under the legislation. Similarly, the enforcement and prosecution mechanisms against offenders have also been put in place. The NAP TIP 2016-2020 also demands that operational measures to be improved through establishing mechanisms to strengthen laws, encouraging collaborative efforts among enforcement agencies and promoting cross-border exchange of crucial information (Bernama, 2017). The introduction of a high-level committee (HLC) meeting, attended by all Council members of MAPO, is effective to oversee that continuous and follow through efforts are taken by various ministries, agencies and NGOs to eliminate human trafficking in the country. This has contributed to the improvement in the tier achieved by Malaysia in the TIP Report recently.

The Royal Malaysia Police, through the ATIPSOM Unit of Criminal Investigation Department, has successfully conducted 271 anti-human trafficking raids and 120 anti-smuggling of migrant raids throughout Malaysia in 2016 (PDRM, 2016). This accounts for Royal Malaysia Police's contribution to the efforts in combating human trafficking and smuggling of migrants. Malaysia is targeting to be elevated to Tier 1 of the TIP Report by 2020. At the same time, Malaysia is aiming to be the third ASEAN country (after Brunei and Singapore) to be accepted into the United States Visa Waiver Programme (VWP) through the implementation of the National Immigration Control System (or *Sistem Kawalan Imigresen Nasional*, SKIN, in Malay). The implementation of SKIN is to protect the country's border entry points from infiltration of undesirable elements. The acceptance into VWP will not only help to facilitate Malaysians for greater business opportunity in the United States, but is also a recognition of the international standing of Malaysians for cross-border movements. The government's action plan that seeks to strengthen its legal and policy framework through an integrated human rights-based approach is a step forward. It shows the commitment of the government to prioritise prosecution to deal with the problem and prevent further incidence of human trafficking. These efforts shall pave the way to the Tier 1 status of the TIP Report by 2020.

7. STRENGTHENING MALAYSIA BORDER SECURITY

Tackling the problem of crime cannot ignore the international dimension. Transnational crime is getting more sophisticated in their operation. The rise in threats and occurrence of terrorism as well as human, drug and weapon trafficking globally calls for an urgent need to also enhance border security. Malaysia's security forces must be proactive in facing these threats by focusing on preventive measures to arrest international and cross-border crime with the purpose of not only keeping Malaysia safe, but also on safeguarding the economy (NTP, 2016).

Pro-active measures were taken towards strengthening the borders of Malaysia. The country's socio-economic prosperity and development has increased its 'vulnerability' to criminal elements. Human and drug trafficking, and the threat of terrorists infiltrating the borders, are very serious issues that must be addressed urgently. To address this issue, the existing Anti-Smuggling Unit (*Unit Pencegahan Penyeludupan* (UPP) in Malay) operating at the border of Malaysia and Thailand has been upgraded into the status of an agency. It is now known as the Malaysian Border Security Agency (*Agensi Kawalan Sempadan Malaysia* (AKSEM) in Malay), and placed under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It was administratively set up in 2015 and officially launched on 24 May 2016, with the aim to strengthen border security to prevent criminal syndicates from operating at the borders. With an agency status, AKSEM needs to have the relevant legal framework for operation. The bill on Malaysian Border Security Agency Act (MBSAA 2017) was tabled in Parliament by the Minister of Home Affairs on 9 August 2017. It was passed in Parliament on the same day. Subsequently it was passed by the House of Senate on 22 August 2017.

Upon gazetting of the Act, the Malaysian Border Security Agency (MBSA) will be given its own authority to enforce laws and conduct its own investigations as an entity capable of securing the border. A senior police officer, was appointed as the first Director-General of MBSA based on his experience and track record in managing border security (Bernama, 2017a, 2017b). The establishment of AKSEM was benchmarked against several best practices internationally, including the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) under U.S. Department of Homeland Security which was set up on 1 March 2003, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) established on 12 December 2003, and Australia Border Force (ABF) under the Department of Immigration and Border Protection that was set up on 1 July 2015.

8. ENHANCING HUMAN RESOURCES

One of the Government's core efforts is to transform the law enforcement agencies. Under the Modern Policing initiative, the Royal Malaysia Police's vision is to become a world-class, service-oriented police force by 2020. To achieve the vision, the Royal Malaysia Police is taking the initiatives to intensify technology use to improve efficiency and productivity. Computerisation of work systems, and streamlining and simplifying decades-old processes and work practices will free up personnel to focus on eliminating existing threats to safety and security, and facing new ones (NTP, 2016). In doing so, some of departments in the Royal Malaysia Police were reorganised and restructured in accordance to the new responsibilities and to be more focussed and target oriented.

The Department of Crime Prevention and Community Safety (*Jabatan Pencegahan Jenayah dan Keselamatan Komuniti* (JPJKK) in Malay) was set up on 9 June 2014 to spearhead all crime prevention initiatives including those originating from the NKRA in Reducing Crime and from the National Blue Ocean Strategy (Zahid Hamidi, 2016). The department oversees cross ministerial and cross agency initiatives involving the police, armed forces, RELA, the Department of Civil Defence and other relevant non-governmental organisations. The NKRA in Reducing Crime maintains that the fight against crime requires cooperation from all levels of the society and community, and has therefore executed initiatives designed to solicit greater collaboration from the public. These efforts culminated in the United Against Crime (UAC) Campaign that was launched in 2013. The campaign highlighted the importance of crime education and awareness, and the need for communities to take ownership of problems within their communities. UAC is one of the important efforts taken by the Government to address the issue of crime. It has two objectives: (i) to create public awareness that every citizen has an important role to play in safeguarding his/her own safety and security; and (ii) to develop an integrated and proactive approach between enforcement agencies in collaboration with the NGOs and community in fighting crime hand in hand.

The Integrity and Standard Compliance Department (ISCD) was rebranded in 2014 and upgraded as a department in Royal Malaysia Police. This is an effort towards improving the image of the Royal Malaysia Police as a clean and effective enforcement agency. A significant event took place on 21 June 2016. This is the signing ceremony for the Cooperation Note between Royal Malaysia Police, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission and National Archives of Malaysia with the aim to eradicate corruption and power abuse of the police and thus to enhance

the image and professionalism of the police force. ISCD has published three main guide books thus far. These are the Standard Compliance Guide Manual Book, Book on Code of Ethics and PDRM Integrity Plan Book for 2016-2020. All these books have served as reference and provide guidelines to the police personnel for performance of their duty (PDRM, 2016).

The latest addition to the new structure of the Royal Malaysia Police Force is the Traffic Enforcement and Investigation Department (*Jabatan Siasatan dan Penguatkuasaan Trafik* (JSPT) in Malay). The Department was officiated during the 209th Police Day Celebration on 25 March 2016 at the Police Training Centre (Pusat Latihan Polis (PULAPOL) in Malay), Kuala Lumpur. Formally known as the Police Traffic Unit, it was separated from the Internal Security and Public Order Department (ISPOD) because its workload on managing traffic offences and traffic accidents has tripled over the years. A department on its own is needed in anticipation of new and added responsibility in years to come (PDRM, 2016).

The transformation in the rebranding and restructuring of the departments in the Royal Malaysia Police in the recent years has added to its strength of near 120,000 personnel. The transformation is much needed to boost their moral, spirit and confidence, and to prepare them for more challenges ahead. Table 1 shows the departmental structure of the Royal Malaysia Police.

Table 1: The Departmental Structure of Royal Malaysia Police

No.	Department	Abbreviation
1.	Criminal Investigation Department	CID
2.	Management Department	MD
3.	Special Branch	SB
4.	Internal Security and Public Order Department	ISPOD
5.	Narcotic Criminal Investigation Department	NCID
6.	Commercial Crime Investigation Department	CCID
7.	Strategic Resource and Technology Department	StaRt
8.	Crime Prevention and Community Safety Department	CPCSD
9.	Integrity and Standard Compliance Department	ISCD
10.	Traffic Enforcement and Investigation Department	TEID

Source: PDRM, 2016

9. CONCLUSION

The country is on the last leg of the journey to 2020, the year that Malaysia envisioned to achieve the status of a high income nation. The Government took some bold measures and embarked on the National Transformation Programme in 2010 to accelerate the transformation needed to achieve the 2020 vision to be a developed and high income nation, where its citizens enjoy good well-being. Concurrently, the Ministry of Home Affairs and its lead enforcement agency for maintaining law and order, i.e. the Royal Malaysia Police, have also initiated some bold and immediate transformation programmes to provide the necessary quantum leap to achieve its vision to become a world class, service-oriented police force by 2020, aiming at providing better services to people in need and maintaining a high level of safety and security in Malaysia. The transformation programmes have resulted in a more resilient police force that is ready to take on the challenges of the 21st century and beyond. The transformation also seeks to infuse strong ethical values, apart from creating a police force that is efficient, progressive, competitive, dynamic and robust.

As we usher in the year 2020, the Malaysian Government is committed to continue its journey in bringing the nation to another level height. The recently announced long term plan of National Transformation 2050 (or *Transformasi Nasional 2050* (TN50) in Malay) is poised to further transform the country to become the top 20 most developed nation in the world in 2050. As chief of the cluster for national security under TN50, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Royal Malaysia Police have started a series of community engagement dialogues to get public views and their aspirations regarding the future architecture and landscape of Malaysia's security, as well as their expectations of the authorities in preserving law and peace in the country.

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