



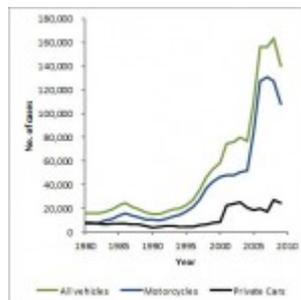
Private car theft statistics in Malaysia: One stolen every 24 minutes

Update (26 Feb. 2013): My two blog articles on [car security](#) and [car theft statistics](#) in Malaysia were used in ntv7's The Breakfast Show today (Episode 41). Go to [tonton](#) (search for the show — free registration and free viewing) to view the show's segment on car security (at about 42:20 minutes).

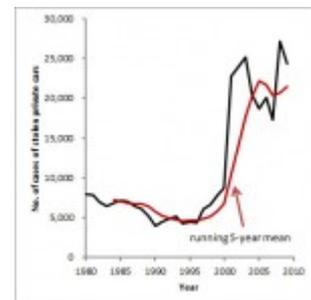
Update (23 Mar. 2012): I wrote a [review of some car security systems in Malaysia](#).



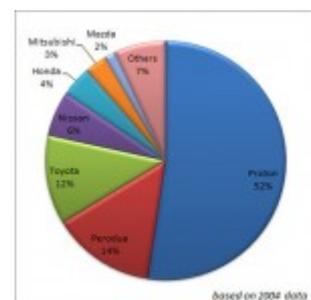
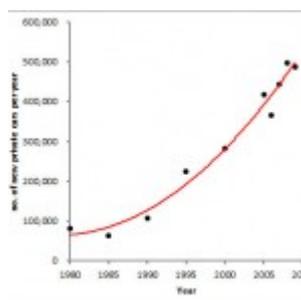
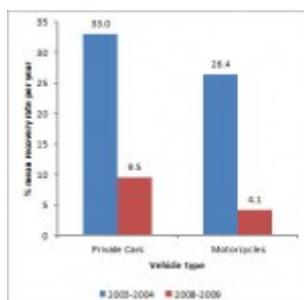
Nissan Grand Livina:
Possibly the safest
Nissan model from
car thieves?



Rise in vehicle theft in
Malaysia



Number of stolen
private cars in
Malaysia



Recovery rate for
stolen vehicles in
Malaysia

Number of registered
cars in Malaysia

Car models stolen in
Malaysia (in 2004)

This week I traded in my 9-year old Perodua Kembara for a spanking new Nissan Grand Livina. My Kembara has served me well, but it has recurring problems with its drive shaft, couplings, and suspension. Particularly, in the past two years, new problems have started to emerge such as a mysterious oil leak (undetected even by car mechanics), increasingly rigid suspension, air-conditioning that cannot be left on for longer than two hours, creaking sounds from my drive shaft whenever I make a sharp and slow turn, peeling car tint, and a boom box that, well, doesn't boom anymore.

Even a complete engine overhaul a year ago could not bring new life into my old Kembara.

My old Kembara also felt too small for my family, and I would become easily tired especially after long journeys because my old car didn't seem to travel comfortably any more.

After some research, I settled on [Nissan's Grand Livina](#) (advertised as "DRIVES LIKE A SEDAN, FITS LIKE AN MPV" - how could I resist?). So, on September 28, 2010, 1:30 pm, and without much fun fare, I bid adieu to my old Kembara and received my new Grand Livina.

One of my first concerns when I got my new car was about car security. We have all heard about the rise in car theft in Malaysia, but I was curious to exactly what the real statistics were.

However, getting detailed information about car crime statistics in Malaysia, at least from the internet, is rather scarce. I present here what data I managed to find, and by examining the trends, I did some mathematical estimations to fill in the "gaps in data" and to make some projections.

[A study by ACP Amar Singh Sidhu](#) showed that motor vehicle theft is high and rising. In 1980, motor vehicle theft comprised only 22% of the total crime cases. But this has increased to 49% in 2004. I estimate that motor vehicle theft would now make up about 74% of the total crime cases in 2009. This means that today

three quarters of the crime in Malaysia would be due to vehicle theft.

And motorcycle theft is a huge percentage of the type of total motor vehicles stolen. In 2004, for example, motorcycles comprised 68% of the total motor vehicle theft, whereas private cars was 27%. The proportion of motorcycle theft shows an increasing trend. In the 2005-2009 period, motorcycles are estimated to make up 80% of all the motor vehicles stolen, and private cars 15%.

As a private car owner, what concerns me more is the statistics on stolen private cars. Surprisingly, the number of private cars stolen generally fell every year from 1980 to 1995, after which this trend reversed. Especially after 2000, the number of stolen private cars increased sharply. In 1980-1995, the average number of stolen private cars is 5,958 a year, but in 2005-2009, this figure increased by more than 3.5 times to 21,501 private cars stolen a year.

In the “honeymoon” period of 1980-1995, the number of stolen private cars fell an average of 3.2% every year, but in 2005-2009, the number of stolen private cars instead increased by an average of about 6.4% every year. This translates to a private car stolen every 24 minutes in Malaysia since 2005.

What about the recovery rates for stolen vehicles? In 2003-2004 period, the average recovery rate per year for private cars was 33.0% (motorcycles was 26.4%). This means there is a one-third chance that a stolen private car would be recovered and returned to its grateful owner.

However, [the latest PIAM statistics](#) show that the recovery rates have since fallen sharply. In the 2008-2009, the average recovery rates per year for stolen private cars and motorcycles were less than 10% and 5%, respectively! This is very alarming news for me. It means there is now less than one in a ten chance of getting back one's stolen car.

I contacted one GPS car tracking company which fits a hidden tracking device in a car. The idea is this tracking device helps to locate the stolen car by giving out its GPS coordinates, increasing the chance of recovery. The salesman from this GPS car tracking company said that their recovery rate is 80% (although they advertised their recovery rate as 90%). No matter, either 80 or 90% is sufficiently impressive compared the national average of less than 10% for private cars. Moreover, the company's average period of recovering a stolen vehicle is 4 days.

Since 2005, the average number of newly registered cars per year is 442,023, and the addition of new cars increases by about 7.3% per year. As stated earlier, since 2005, private car theft increases by an average of about 6.4% per year.

This means that more private cars are added to the roads per year than private cars (old and new) are stolen per year. So, the risk of having your car stolen is actually increasingly less per year simply because the number of stolen cars can't keep up with the number of cars being added to the roads per year.

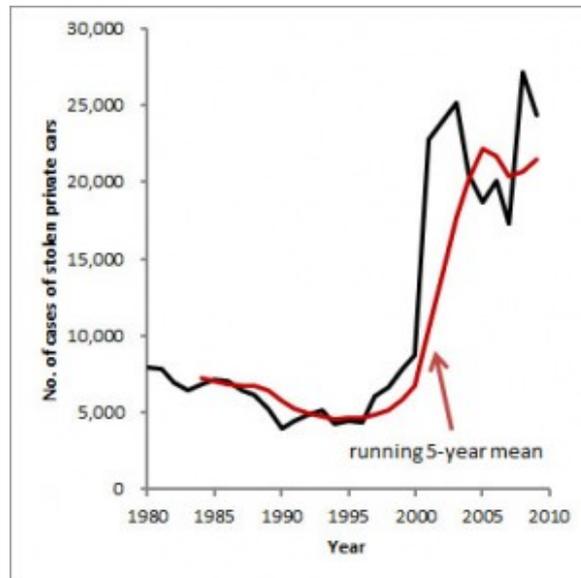
Not all cars are created equally. Some cars are more popular with thieves. Latest statistics show that local cars, Proton and Perodua, are the two most stolen cars, making up two-thirds of the type of car models stolen. More than half (52%) of the car models stolen are Proton. This [dubious honour continues even to 2009](#), where 57% of the private cars stolen belong loyally to Proton.

Although Nissan cars are the fourth most stolen car models in Malaysia, its proportion only forms 6% of the all car models stolen. The latest PIAM statistics reveal Nissan Vannette is the most stolen Nissan model. But what about Nissan Grand Livina? The 2010 PIAM list showed none reported stolen for both 2008 and 2009! Pure joy.

At the end of this exercise, I am now more mindful about the car theft statistics in Malaysia. I also did some researching on ways to beef up car security: what works (to some extent) and what doesn't (myths, over-hype, etc.). The web is full of advice on car security and stories about experiences of having a car stolen or nearly stolen.

So, what did I do to improve the security of my Nissan Grand Livina? Did I fix any steering lock, gear lock, brake/clutch lock, GPS car tracking system, immobilizer, motion and sound detector, anti-tilt alarm, or window security tint?

Ah, lesson number one in car security — Don't show, don't tell. The less people know about your security, the better.



Number of stolen private cars in Malaysia

Sources and additional reading

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