

# 'Stab city' officials play down assaults blitz

Michael Mulqueen

THREE recent attacks in Limerick did not mean the city was a violent or dangerous city to live in or visit, the city's deputy mayor and most senior garda officer last night.

"These three were isolated

incidents which happened over one weekend but in no way do they change the fact that Limerick is one of the best places in the country to live, work and visit," said Deputy Mayor, Maria Byrne.

The city's reputation was also stoutly defended by Chief Superintendent Gerry

Kelly who took over as Limerick's most senior garda officer last week.

"It's not just Limerick, it's society generally. I saw violent crime when I was chief in Dun Laoghaire and in Portlaoise," said Supt Kelly.

"In Ennis, where I was also, a man was dragged

down a lane in broad daylight on a Sunday afternoon and killed."

Limerick, which has for years struggled with the tag 'Stab City', ranks seventh in the league table for crime rates despite being the third largest city in the Irish republic.

Crime statistics for the first six months of this year show that there were 79 serious assaults in Limerick, compared with 448 in Dublin.

There are 18.35 indictable crimes per 1,000 people in Limerick, compared with 38.6 in Dublin.