

Wanted: Super sleuths to solve difficult cases

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KUALA LUMPUR: More brains than brawn — this is top of the police wish list this year as they embark on their recruitment drive to bring in 60,000 more personnel to the force.

Realising that crooks are now smarter and more sophisticated, police will be looking for “super sleuths” as they aim to increase their crime-solving rate.

Federal CID director Datuk Christopher Wan Soo Kee did not hide the fact that intelligence gathering is one of the main weaknesses in the force now.

This is evident in several high-profile cases last year which remain unsolved.

This include the country's biggest robbery — the RM50 million microchip heist at the Batu Maung Free Commercial Zone in Penang on Nov 20.

Although police arrested 13 suspects, all were released after interrogation. No one has been charged and the microchips have not been recovered.

“My main agenda for this year is to increase the crime-solving rate by enhancing the quality of investigations.

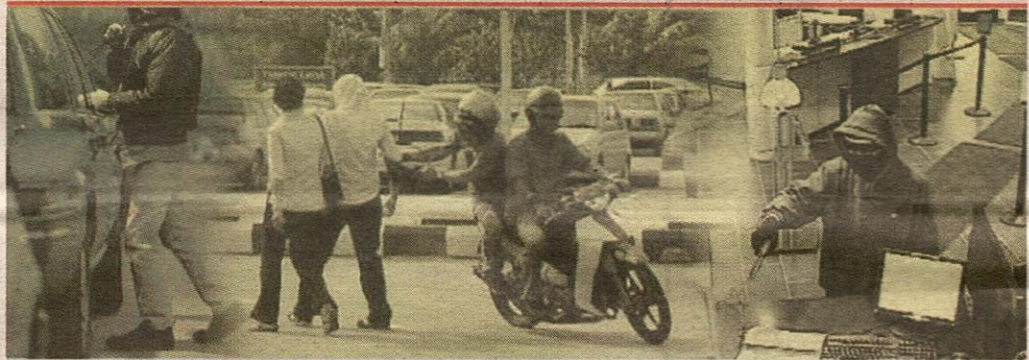
“I will look into improving every aspect of investigation, particularly intelligence gathering.

“It is not that our personnel are not experts in their own fields, but we will provide training and opportunity for them to constantly improve in order to achieve a higher crime-solving rate,” Wan said.

The latest figures from Bukit Aman showed that from January to July, the solving rate for serious crimes was at 42.05 per cent, while for property crimes, it was 38.67 per cent.

“We hope to produce more skilled police personnel with the advanced training programmes we have in store for the new recruits,” he said.

SERIOUS CRIMES						
Type of offence	Jan - July		Increase	%	Solved	%
	2005	2006				
Murder	290	357	67	23.10	231	64.71
Rape	1,013	1,363	350	34.55	1,244	91.27
Robbery	7,511	10,419	2,908	38.72	4,478	42.98
Total	10,819	14,145	3,325	30.73	5,953	42.09
Van/ lorry/ heavy vehicle theft	3,058	3,578	520	17	932	26.05
Car theft	5,662	6,333	671	11.85	2,312	36.51
Motorcycle theft	28,179	35,531	7,352	26.09	13,777	38.77
Snatch theft	5,481	5,567	86	1.57	2,525	45.36
Total	44,385	53,015	8,629	19.44	19,546	36.87



Wan also stressed the importance of public co-operation in preventing crime.

“Preventing a crime is always better than solving it,” he said.

On the microchip heist, Wan said border patrols had been increased as police believe the loot was still in the country.

He did not want to comment further on the case.

After almost six weeks, police have only found the two container lorries which the robbers had used to transport the stolen goods.

In the incident, 20 robbers, four of them disguised as Rela members, gained entry into the cargo

complex and forced the workers there to drink liquid chloroform before carting away the microchips.

The heist gripped nationwide attention for the way it was carried out and the value of the items lost.

Below are several of the other high-profile cases which remain unsolved:

- Oct. 24: Thieves drilled their way into the Public Bank strongroom in Seri Kembangan and escaped with an estimated RM4 million in cash and valuables. The incident took place on the first day of Hari Raya. No one has been charged in that case.
- Nov 14: Two security guards

were killed during a robbery at the Tesco hypermarket in Shah Alam. A gang of trigger-happy robbers fired at least 19 shots before escaping with jewellery worth about RM1 million. Two security guards — Abdul Sukur Salleh, 30, from Kota Tinggi, Johor and Sharaidi Mat Salleh, 33, from Pasir Mas, Kelantan — were shot and killed.

A 40-year-old contractor, Lee Chin Liam, was also shot in the stomach but survived. There are no arrests yet.

Police believe the gang of five is also responsible for three goldsmith robberies and five murders since July.