



Johor police chief Datuk Mokhtar Shariff and Johor Baru city mayor and council president Datuk Naim Nasir holding up some of the banners advertising moneylending schemes that were taken down during a clean-up operation. — NST picture by Zain Ahmed

Police out to catch Ah Long 'fathers'

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JOHOR BARU: Police are close to putting all loan shark syndicates here out of business after identifying several "fathers of Ah Long" operating in the state.

State police chief Datuk Mokhtar Shariff said police were completing their investigations into the ringleaders of illegal moneylending syndicates and expected to bring them to book soon.

He said these "fathers" provided the syndicates with strong finan-

cial backing through their close links with crime syndicates involved in prostitution, drug trafficking and four-digit gambling.

"We believe their wealth is linked to money-laundering.

"My warning to them is that we will get you and take you off the streets," he said after a joint operation by police and the Johor Baru City Council to remove Ah Long stickers and bunting in the city here yesterday.

The operation, which was also carried out in other districts, was aimed at giving the local authorities a morale booster in the war against Ah Long syndicates.

Mokhtar said police would not tolerate Ah Long activities and he criticised those who borrowed from Ah Long because of their gambling addiction.

City mayor and council president Datuk Naim Nasir, who was present, said it was illegal to put up

stickers and bunting to advertise moneylending services, a common practice among Ah Long.

"It does not matter whether it is licensed or otherwise. The fact is that such a form of advertisement is illegal.

"It ruins public property and brings no benefit to society, besides being an eyesore."

On snatch thefts, Mokhtar said police had arrested 104 suspects, most of whom were drug addicts.