

Cops seize RM220m worth of drugs in nine months

NEW STRAITS TIMES 19 NOV 2010 PAGE 12

KUALA LUMPUR: Police have busted 16 laboratories and seized drugs with a street value of more than RM220 million in the first nine months of the year.

Federal Narcotics Criminal Investigation Department deputy director Datuk Othman Harun said 61 people were arrested in connection with the raids.

"The drug labs busted were located in Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Johor," he said, adding that 11 such set-ups were raided last year.

"Unlike previous years, the arrests made during the raids did not include any chemists or specialists. Those arrested were mainly locals and Iranians."

It was learnt that the ingredients used to manufacture the drugs were already in place. All the traffickers had to do was to follow the instructions.

"It was similar to instant noodles,

all they had to do was add hot water and the seasoning. That is why there were no chemists arrested during this year's raids."

It is understood that police seized 3,559kg of various drugs and 2.2 million pills, including psychotropic and amphetamine-type stimulants.

Last year, police seized more than RM380 million worth of drugs, including 2.7 million pills and 7,000kg of various narcotic substances.

Othman said more than 1,000 foreigners were arrested for drug trafficking this year and they were facing the gallows.

Leading the list were 283 Myanmar nationals followed by 100 Iranians. They were caught mostly for smuggling syabu to other countries, while using Malaysia as the transit point.

"Iranian drug syndicates were detected this year trying to penetrate the local drug market, besides using

Malaysia as a transit point.

"As the cost of producing syabu in their country was lower, they were attempting to grab a slice of the market in this region.

"Several African nationals were arrested. They are believed to be members of syndicates operating in Malaysia.

"Police are monitoring their activities as they constantly change their tactics to avoid being detected by the authorities.

"Previously, many locals were duped into being drug mules but when this proved ineffective, the syndicates hired foreigners instead."

This year, 113,551 locals were picked up for drug-related offences, compared with 85,564 last year.

Othman said 8,195 drug traffickers were arrested between January and September, compared with 6,381 during the same period last year.

2010 DRUG WAR BY NUMBERS

3,559kg
of drugs seized

2.2 million
pills seized

1,000
foreigners arrested

