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JOHOR BARU: Four people believed to be members of a drug trafficking syndicate were caught red-handed packing drugs at a budget hotel room in Taman Setia Tropika on Friday.

The three men, aged 26 and 39, and a 33-year-old woman were detained after police raided the room and seized RM500,00 worth of ecstasy pills and methamphetamines in the 1.50am operation.

Johor Baru Utara district police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohd Taib Ahmad said an Indonesian was among the three men arrested.

He said a team of police personnel from the Johor Baru Utara narcotics criminal investigation department raided the budget hotel and found 15 packets of ecstasy pills weighing 4.5kg and 5.08g of methamphetamine worth RM500,000.

He said each of the 15 packets contained about 1,000 red-

coloured ecstasy pills.

The group had been using the budget hotel room as a transit point for drug packing before distributing them at night clubs here.

"Investigations revealed that the group had stayed in the same room for almost a week based on the check-in records.

"We are questioning the suspects on how long they have been operating in the city," said Taib at the district police headquarters yesterday.

Investigations revealed that each ecstasy pill was sold for RM30 to night club patrons.

"The seized items were estimated at RM500,000.

"We believe the drugs were obtained from a supplier who manufactured the drug elsewhere.

Our investigations will also focus on identifying the location of the drug processing labs.

"One of the male suspects is an



District police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohd Taib Ahmad (centre) with the seized drugs in Johor Baru Utara yesterday. PIC BY MOHD AZREN JAMALUDIN

Indonesian who may have counterparts in neighbouring countries," Taib said.

The four have been remanded until Thursday to facilitate inves-

tigations under Section 39B of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 for trafficking, which carries the mandatory death sentence upon conviction.