

Bukit Aman cripples synthetic drugs syndicate

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JOHOR BARU — Despite being new players in the illicit drug trade, they had captured a substantial part of the business in Kuala Lumpur, Johor Baru and also across the Causeway, bringing in thousands of ringgit in profit within a short time.

However, their popularity was also their undoing as anti-narcotics authorities from Thailand and Singapore shared intelligence with their Malaysian counterparts to put an end to the syndicate's Malaysian operations last Saturday.

Johor deputy police chief Datuk Mohd Kamarudin Md Din said Bukit Aman's Narcotics Criminal Investigations Department (NCID) launched a nationwide operation leading to the arrest of seven suspects and seizure of drugs worth more than RM900,000.

"Bukit Aman deployed the Special Tactical Intelligence Narcotics Group (STING) operatives in simultaneous raids in Kuala Lumpur and Johor Baru at 8.30pm on Saturday.

"In the raids seven suspects including two women, aged between 26 and 52, who we believe were distributing the drugs were arrested," he told a press conference at the Johor police contingent headquarters yesterday.

From the seizures in several locations at Taman Mount Austin and Bandar Datuk Onn here, the syndicate focused on mainly synthetic drugs as the members arrested were in possession of 8.2kg of crystal methamphetamine (syabu), 1.5kg of heroin, 605g of ketamine, 2,205 psychotropic pills, 1,101 Erimin 5 pills and a 3,950 ecstasy pills.

Operatives also seized RM144,755, jewellery worth RM40,77 and seven luxury-type vehicles worth RM730,000.

Malay Mail learnt the syndicate had links



The drugs and cash that were seized in the raids. — Picture by Roslan Khamis

with drug barons in Thailand who shipped drugs to them for distribution.

The synthetic drugs were not made locally, based on the seized drugs markings and also content.

Their rise in the regional caught the attention of Thai Narcotics Suppression Bureau and Singapore's Central Narcotics Bureau.

Mohd Kamarudin said it was still too early to gauge the syndicate's distribution network reach and how long it had been operating.

"Initial investigations showed the syndicate only stored and distributed illicit drugs and did not have any manufacturing laboratories," he said.

It is believed the syndicate targetted major cities from the central to southern region of

the country with Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya, Johor Baru and the very lucrative Singapore markets.

The drugs are sold to agents who sold it themselves or to runners popularly known as "tokan" who sold the drugs at entertainment outlets and private parties.

Mohd Kamarudin said the suspects have been remanded to facilitate investigations.