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3 DRUG LABS

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JOHOR BARU: Special Tactics and Intelligence Narcotics Group (Sting) members and Johor Narcotics Crime Investigation Department (NCID) officers raided three heroin processing laboratories in the state on Saturday.

They also carried out four other raids, arresting eight people and seizing drugs worth RM640,000 in total, in the seven operations, all against one syndicate.

Federal NCID director Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh said the raids were conducted following three weeks of surveillance by Sting operatives.

He said those arrested included a Bangladeshi chemist. The others were Malaysians between the ages of 28 and 59.

The raids, said Mohamad, were carried out between 2.40pm and 7pm.

He said in the first raid, two Malaysian men in their 30s and 40s were nabbed at a house in Bukit Indah here, which was used as a heroin processing lab.

"From the house, we seized heroin and caffeine (used in processing the heroin), as well as various drug processing equipment.

One of the men had a criminal record for drug-related offences," he said.

Mohamad said the next raid saw two men aged 35 and 42 arrested at a house in Taman Bukit Indah here, which the syndicate used as a store for chemicals needed in the processing of heroin.

"The third raid was in Taman Bukit Perdana, Batu Pahat, where two more men, aged 28 and 29, were arrested, one of whom had once been detained under the Restricted Residence Act," he said at the Johor police headquarters here.

Sting members and NCID officers then raided another house in Bukit Indah before turning their attention to another house-turned-drug lab in Taman Mutiara Rini near here.

In the penultimate raid, said Mohamad, the Bangladeshi chemist, who is in his 30s, was arrested in Jalan Puncak Kempas.

The final raid saw a third lab, located in Taman Tan Sri Yaakob in Skudai, raided.

The drugs seized were 31.7kg of heroin, 1.06kg of heroin base, 440g of ketamine, 110g of syabu



Federal Narcotics Crime Investigation Department director Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh (second from right) with the seized drugs and drug processing equipment at the Johor police headquarters in Johor Baru yesterday. PIC BY MOHD AZREN JAMALUDIN

and 84kg of caffeine.

"Eight vehicles were also seized, along with cash in ringgit, Singapore and US dollars, and Thai baht.

"The total value of the seizures was RM801,000," said Mohamad.

All eight alleged members of the syndicate are being investi-

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