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RM10m in ill-gotten gains confiscated (HL)

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Police have seized more than RM10 million in assets in Johor, Penang, Kelantan, Selangor and here, belonging to some of the 25 suspected traffickers arrested recently.

It has been described as the biggest ever seizure of ill-gotten gains from dadah trafficking.

Between June 1 and 14, Federal and State police carried out a series of operations to round up the suspected traffickers and seized the assets under the Dangerous Drugs (Forfeiture of Property) Act 1988.

The Act allows the police to confiscate money, jewellery, vehicles, share certificates, bonds, and property, believed to have been bought from the sale of dadah.

Police have also moved to freeze the bank accounts of the traffickers.

Top Federal police officials are elated with the success of the joint Federal-State police swoop on the traffickers, as the forfeiture in assets, so far, represents about 19 per cent of the RM54 million confiscated from dadah barons and peddlars since 1988.

"This is just the beginning. The next couple of weeks will see more seizures," said a top Federal police source.

The source, who requested anonymity, said the assets seized were only from about half of the 25 traffickers arrested in the recent operation.

"Can you imagine what the total value of their ill-gotten gains will be once we are through with all of them?"

The RM10 million is from 10 posh cars, five houses and apartments, and cash and valuables worth hundreds of thousands of ringgit.

Since 1988 and up to February this year, police have seized the ill-gotten gains of dadah traffickers which include 20 houses, 19.13ha of land, vehicles, jewellery and cash. Total value: RM54 million.

Last Friday, the reported the police success in rounding up the traffickers. After months of undercover operations, the link between dadah suppliers and nightspot operators in the Klang Valley was exposed.

The 14-day operation also saw the seizure of 302kg of ganja, 17kg of heroin and 88kg of raw opium.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also the Home Minister, had ordered police to crackdown on the nightspots which had been used by traffickers to peddle their dadah.

Fourteen of the 25 suspects - active in supplying heroin, raw opium, ganja and Ecstasy pills to entertainment outlets in the Klang Valley - had pointed their finger at a director and a manager of two discotheques in Cheras and Damansara Jaya respectively, as being the "dadah barons", who called the shots in big-time local and international dadah trafficking.

Police investigations have revealed that the two men were dubbed "barons" because they dealt in large quantities of dadah, using established pushers to mingle with patrons of their entertainment outlets to distribute the dadah, including Ecstasy pills.

Both men, who operate two of the most popular nightspots in the Klang Valley, are being detained under the Dangerous Drugs (Special Preventive Measures) Act 1985.

They have to serve a minimum of two years at a maximum security prison with the possibility of renewal if they do not repent.

The remaining traffickers would be charged under section 39B and 39A of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952, which carries the death penalty and life

imprisonment, respectively, if convicted.
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