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Crime-Youth

STUDENT'S MURDER AN "EYE-OPENER" TO POLICE

By: Abdul Aziz Harun

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 24 (Bernama) -- The case of a Form Two student murdered for refusing to pay RM5 extortion money in Johor prompted police to probe into social ills besetting students such as drug abuse, extortion and gangsterism.

So far, more than 100 students including schoolgirls have been detained in Johor, Pahang and Melaka for such cases.

Juvenile delinquency has existed in the country for a long time with the number of cases increasing every year but it began to attract public attention after the death of Zulkarnain Abdul Rahim, 14, of Sekolah Menengah Datuk Abdul Rahman Yassin, Tampoi, in connection with an extortion case early this year.

Following the incident, 10 students from the same school were detained for investigations and since then, the people or police cannot close an eye to students involvement in crimes.

Bukit Aman police statistics showed 4,601 youths under 18 years were arrested for their involvement in 2,820 criminal cases including murder, house breaking, robbery and drugs last year.

Bukit Aman Public Relations Officer Chief Insp Rasdi Ramli said 173 of them are aged between 10 and 12.

Last year, 22 juveniles were detained for suspected involvement in murder cases, vehicle thefts (526) daylight robberies (370), daylight property thefts (351), other thefts (318), drug related cases (134), daylight house breakings (131) and other criminal cases like rape, firearms and robbery (100).

The number of youths arrested also increased to 4,601 involving 2,820 cases last year, 4,192 arrests in 2,573 cases (1995) and 3,247 arrests in 2,084 cases (1994).

The most disturbing fact revealed by the statistics was the involvement of Malay youths in criminal activities. Of the 4,601 youths detained, 2,831 were Malay boys and 59 Malay girls.

Rasdi said Malay youths involvement in criminal activities topped the list with 2,890 in 4,601 arrests made last year, 2,402 in 4,192 arrests in 1995 and 1,862 in 3,247 arrests in 1994.

Rasdi said Johore had the biggest number of youths arrested for criminal involvement last year at 739, followed by Kedah (591), Selangor (544) and Melaka (443).

Meanwhile, Police Narcotics Department Director Datuk Salleh Mat Som said as at Sept 1996, 544 youths under 18 years were arrested (91 were aged between 13 and 25) for drug addiction while in 1995, 666 youths were arrested.

A total of 53 youths were detained for drug trafficking offences compared to 40 in the previous year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed concern over the glaring social problems among students and called upon the people to come forward to help curb the problem.

It must be remembered that unhealthy activities like loafing, bohsia, punk culture and now crime if allowed to continue will only diminish the hope of making youths the nation's pillar in efforts to achieve Vision 2020 to turn Malaysia into a developed country. -- BERNAMA

AZH ARA TS