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Police given two weeks to nail pornographic VCD distributors

Tony Emmanuel; Leslie Andres

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Police have been given two weeks to come down hard on those responsible for the distribution of pornographic video compact discs and illegal electronic gaming machines.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai had last weekend instructed the Commercial Crimes Division to spearhead the nationwide crackdown on pornographic and pirated VCDs and the Special Branch has been instructed to help.

The crackdown was ordered following a directive from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Federal CID director Datuk Seri Salleh Mat Som said the nationwide operation was already under way.

Last Saturday, State police chiefs and directors of the Special Branch, CID and Internal Security and Public Order were summoned to the Federal police headquarters in Bukit Aman for a meeting with Norian and his deputy, Datuk Seri Bakri Omar.

The explicit instruction was to rid the nation of pirated and pornographic VCDs, illegal electronic gaming machines and illegal immigrants.

The IGP said there must be results by the second week of June.

"All non-priority operations presently supervised by the Commercial Crimes Division have been set aside to enable their officers to focus on the crackdown," Salleh said at the launch of the Commercial Crimes division annual meeting at Hyatt Regency Saujana Subang this morning.

On Monday, city police scored a major success when they uncovered distribution centres for pirated DVDs, VCDs and Playstation games in Cheras and Shah Alam.

Seven people were arrested and more than 1.7 million pirated discs were seized. The discs were estimated to be worth more than RM22.5 million.

The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry has also been acting against the sale and distribution of pirated and pornographic VCDs.

Thousands of pirated and pornographic discs are being seized daily by ministry enforcement officers since they launched their crackdown on May 12.

Business outlets which promote electronic gambling under the guise of entertainment centres, snooker-and-pool arcades and cybercafes are being targeted.

Authorities are also raiding pornographic VCD stores.

Efforts are also being stepped up against illegal gambling activities and authorities are also on the lookout for illegal immigrants who patronise illegal electronic gambling dens.

Several raids to nab illegal immigrants have already been conducted over the past few days, with more planned.