No holiday for enforcement

RAIDS: Immigration teams up with other agencies to fight crime

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newsnst.com.my

It may be the holiday season but there has been no let-up in enforcement across the country.

A midnight raid by the Immigration Department in Klang on Sunday netted 33 foreigners who had overstayed. Also, for three days beginning Friday night, Immigration, police, Rela, National Registration Department and Civil Defence personnel carried out patrols in the Sungai Pelek area in Sepang.

This was part of a community-oriented crime prevention operation, replicating similar exercises previously carried out in Damansara, Brickfields and Johor Baru.

In Bukit Kayu Hitam, at the Malaysia-Thailand border, Customs seized RM1.7 million worth of smuggled cigarettes, liquor and firecrackers and detained five people last Wednesday in the biggest contraband seizure this year (see page 14).

During the Klang 60 Operation on Sunday, the Selangor Immigration Department detained 24 Nigerian men, four Indonesian women and a Filipina at the Golden Villa Condominium in Taman Seletar.

Selangor director Amran Ahmad led three teams of 70 men and four officers, drawn from Immigration offices in Shah Alam, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Port Klang, Kelana Jaya and the Semenyih detention depot.

They stormed the place at 11.45pm while some of the foreigners were partying, one playing Santa Claus. One of them was injured when he jumped from the first floor balcony. A few ran into the bushes nearby.

Two foreigners were found hiding in the ceiling and a trash bin.

Amran said most of those detained, aged between 25 and 40, had entered the country as student and tourist passes.

"Selangor has many institutions of higher learning, so they claimed to be studying here. We gathered intelligence for two weeks before conducting this raid," Amran Ahmad

Selangor Immigration director

"We screened 93 foreigners, including 16 women, staying in B3 condo units there. Two of the Indonesians were sisters living in a unit with three Nigerians. One of them was a 10-year-old girl."

For foreign maids who overstay in Malaysia, they are subject to a fine of RM1,000 per day of overstay with a maximum of 12 months of detention.

KUALA LUMPUR: Foreign maids who have worked continuously for 10 years in the country are required to return to their home country for six months before they can re-apply for a work permit.

Home Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Mahmood Adam said the six-month period was necessary to "break" the maids' stay as those who worked continuously would be eligible for permanent resident status after 10 years.

He said this was a normal practice that was not restricted to maids, but also other foreign workers. "However, those who want to appeal for a shorter period can do so."

Mahmood said there would be no problem in a healthy maid getting a new work permit if she was aged not below 31 and not over 45.

Those who have committed an offence may not get their new permits. By Masami Mustaza

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