

Letter to Editor
New Straits Times

Three latest high profile snatch theft victims involving the late Irene Ong Ai Sam, New Straits Times Managing Editor Datuk Nuraina Samad, and German expatriate Anna Kaster as well as others have once again highlighted the urgent need for the full mobilization of the efforts of the authorities as well as the entire Malaysian public to declare war against snatch thieves.

To say the least those attackers were not only criminals but were most inhuman and deserve the full force of the law to be brought to bear upon them.

While the MCPF welcomes the on-going efforts by the police to fight snatch thefts it is obvious that more needs to be done to grapple with the problem and help prevent more such incidents in the future. More needs to be done to restore public confidence towards their safety.

While more uniformed and plain clothes personnel are needed for street patrols to fight snatch thefts and road-side robberies, there is also a need to tackle the problem at source.

The fact has been established that most snatch thieves are drug addicts who need to support their habit.

The MCPF feels that there should be profiling of snatch thieves so that we will know their background and why they are into it.

If we are to deal with the problem of snatch thieves at source we need to tackle the problem of drug addicts. As long as this problem is not resolved, many drug-related crimes will continue to occur.

In the meanwhile, the MCPF calls on law enforcement agencies, including local authorities and NGOs to work with one mind and commitment to fight the snatch-thief scourge which is a bane in our society.

Various measures should be considered for implementation and these include:-

- a. The police should implement more effective measures to nab snatch thieves throughout the country, if possible, with more resources;
- b. All local authorities should introduce initiatives and implement the guidelines under the safe city concept to provide safety features such as constructing barriers to separate pedestrian walkways and roads;

- c. Pedestrians must enhance their vigilance against snatch thieves and put into practice the guidelines provided by the MCPF and the Police as to how they can prevent snatch thefts;
- d. More civil-minded Malaysians must render help to victims where possible to nab the snatch thieves and hand them over to the authorities;
- e. More stringent punishment must be meted out to those convicted of snatch thefts commensurate with the seriousness of the offence.

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