

Sharjah Police target bootleggers

New stations being set up to help tackle problems.

- By Mariam M. Al Serkal, Staff Reporter
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Sharjah Police in Sharjah are set to open several police stations in several industrial areas to control cases of violence and bootlegging among workers.

"We plan to open a police station in Al Saja'a and other industrial areas by the first half of 2011 to maintain security in the areas," said Major General Humaid Mohammad Al Hudaidi, Chief of Sharjah Police, who made the announcement during an open session with sections from the non-Arab media.

"We face many cases of illegal alcohol trading in workers' accommodations, which tend to evoke many types of violent crime. The bootleggers form gangs and then they have fights with rival gangs, because they don't want the others to work in their areas," said Major General Al Hudaidi.

Problem cases

"We also have problems when workers get drunk and cause a nuisance to residents, and also disrupt traffic," he said, pointing out that last December, 600 drunken workers gathered in front of the Clock Tower to celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

"The number of drug cases is not increasing although there have been some important cases made in 2010 where, according to the quantities seized, indicated they were highly organised gangs. And the number of drug abusers has certainly declined when compared to the statistics in 2009," he said.

Major General Al Hudaidi also addressed the issue of gambling in Sharjah, particularly in Al Rolla, where people take advantage of the crowded neighbourhood.

"Last Friday we arrested 130 people who were gambling and selling illegal goods...Unfortunately, people benefit from crowded areas and think that they can blend in with the crowd."

Increased patrols

Police patrols have also been increased in a number of areas to curb the trend of people breaking into shops and stealing electric cables, and that Sharjah Police have managed to arrest a number of gangs in the past year.

He noted that the people who commit crimes such as stealing electric cables are either absconders or illegal residents.

To combat crimes in which the perpetrators pose as officers from the Criminal Investigation Department, Major General Al Hudaidi explained that Sharjah Police officers now carry an identification card written in both Arabic and English.

"We urge residents to read the identification cards presented to them, and not to fall victim to such people who pose as police officers," he said, adding that residents should contact Sharjah Police immediately if they suspect that such types of crimes are being perpetrated in their neighbourhoods.

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