

Swedish Police Urge Public Help Amid Major Surge in Anti-refugee Crimes



Stockholm, January 28 (RHC)-- A Swedish police chief has issued an urgent public plea for assistance in solving numerous serious crime cases against foreign refugees, including murders, beatings, rapes and dozens of attempted killings.

In a open letter, Malmo City Police Chief Stefan Sinteus called on local residents to offer testimonies that may help police authorities to identify perpetrators in an array of deadlocked investigations into violence against refugees amid a recent upsurge of such incidents in Sweden's third largest city.

Sinteus said police were doing everything they could for suspected perpetrators to be held accountable. "But we cannot do it on our own. We depend on you, and your witness statements, to solve these violent crimes."

The public plea followed reports that potential witnesses in the recent murder of a 16-year-old Iraqi boy – identified as Ahmed Obaid – were reluctant to provide any details regarding the case after racist threats against his former schoolmates were posted under the photo of his dead body.

Obaid was murdered on January 14 in Malmo's Rosengard district, which has attracted local media attention as Sweden's "most notorious refugee ghetto," with an over 80-percent refugee population, mostly from the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe.

Rosengard has repeatedly been a scene of gang and multi-ethnic violence and remains prone to social unrest since less than 40 percent of its residents are employed.

In his open letter, Sinteus specifically mentioned Obaid's murder and an attempted killing of another teenager last Saturday, vowing to deploy all means necessary to press ahead with both probes.

To assist Malmo police to tackle what Sinteus referred to as "an upward spiral [of violence] of large dimensions," reinforcements from the National Operations Department (NOA) were deployed to the city last week.

Extra police officers are expected to arrive in Malmo next week, according to the letter which further noted that a total of 130 police officers are currently working exclusively on probing serious offenses.

"Malmo police are currently investigating 11 murders and 80 attempted murders. Add to that other crimes of violence, beatings, rapes, thefts and frauds," Senteus wrote in the letter, conceding that his department is "extremely strained" by a staff shortage.

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