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65 put to death in campaign

GUANGZHOU authorities have put 65 people to death in the biggest mass execution so far in a law-and-order campaign launched ahead of the Asian Games.

The *Guangzhou Evening Daily* reported that the executions took place in the city on Tuesday.

The daily reported the executions along with an appeal to the population from the Guangzhou deputy mayor, Mr Shi Anhai, calling for "contributions to the anti-crime campaign, which promises to be a long-lasting one".

The daily said there were 15 killers among the criminals executed immediately after sentencing.

The others, according to the paper included 24 who robbed factories and warehouses and 20 muggers who sought out their victims in public toilets.

In his appeal to the people, Mr Shi justified the executions with the need "mercilessly to crush elements bloated with arrogance ... and mark a decisive victory against crime".

Meanwhile, the Hongkong China News Agency reported yesterday that Guangdong police had rounded up more than 400 "criminals on the run".

Agencies