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Funding pledged for North's historical-murders team

The specialist police team investigating unsolved murders in the North will have enough money to keep going, it was announced last night.

Last Friday it was revealed that the 180-strong squad of detectives in the Historical Enquiries Team faced a £1.5 million funding shortfall until its new budget came into effect next April.

It said its work would have to be scaled back significantly after a promise of extra funding was withdrawn - and warned some of the team would have to be dispersed.

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) said at the time that extra funds for the team had to be judged "against the overall challenging financial position".

However, an NIO spokesman said yesterday the team would have the necessary funds to complete this year's work.

"The position always was that there was no question of money being cut. We have always said we will try to find a way to resolve this situation," he said.

"The Historical Enquiries Team are now assured that there will be adequate resources to enable them to complete their programme of work this year."

The team was set up three years ago and given a budget of £34 million over six years to examine more than 3,200 unsolved murders.

PA

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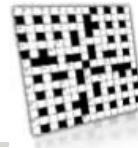
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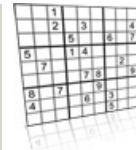
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