

MAHATHIR-DRUGS

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PENANG, DEC. 5 (BERNAMA) -- DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, HAS STRESSED THE NEED FOR AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE.

EDUCATION RELATING TO DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION WOULD CREATE AN AWARENESS ABOUT THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM.

HE SAID THIS IN A SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE REGIONAL MEETING ON EDUCATION CONCERNING THE PROBLEMS OF RELATED WITH THE USE OF DRUGS IN 10 ASIAN COUNTRIES AT THE UNIVERSITI SAINS HERE TODAY.

MORE THAN 30 EXPERTS ON DRUGS FROM NINE COUNTRIES ARE ATTENDING THE EIGHT-DAY MEETING ORGANISED BY UNESCO.

HIS SPEECH WAS READ BY THE DEPUTY LAW MINISTER, ENCIK RAIS YATIM.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHO IS ALSO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON DRUG ABUSE, SAID IT WAS ONLY THROUGH EDUCATION THAT MORE PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY PARENTS, TEACHERS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS, WOULD BECOME COGNIZANT OF THE FACTORS RELATING TO DRUG ABUSE AND THEREFORE WOULD BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THEIR RESPECTIVE ROLES IN DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION. -- BERNAMA MORE 2040/ZCM

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+OUR AIM MUST BE TO USE THE VARIOUS METHODS AND APPROACHES WHICH WILL POSITIVELY INFLUENCE INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND THE COMMUNITY AT THE KNOWLEDGE, EFFECTIVE AND PRACTICE, IN DEALING WITH THE PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MADE IT CLEAR THAT HARSH LAWS ALONE CANNOT SUCCEED IN REDUCING DRUG ABUSE.

+PREVENTION BY LAW IS COMPULSIVE WHILST PREVENTION BY EDUCATION IS PERSASUIVE,+ HE SAID.

EDUCATION, HE STRESSED, SHOULD NOT ONLY PLAY A PREVENTIVE ROLE BUT IT SHOULD ALSO BE INVOLVED IN THE REHABILITATION OF THE FORMER DRUG USER AS HIS INTEGRATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

AS A CLINICIAN HIMSELF, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PSYCHIATRIC OR MEDICAL TREATMENT MIGHT NOT +CURE+ MANY ADDICTS BUT IT SELDOM CREATED NEW PROBLEMS.

HE HOPED THE MEETING WOULD ADOPT A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH AND CONSIDER THE PROBLEMS PERTAINING TO THIS REGION IN FORMULATING RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE PROBLEM.

EARLIER, THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA, TAN SRI HAJI HAMDAN SHEIKH TAHIR, SAID THE UNIVERSITY WAS WILLING TO BECOME THE REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE WHERE STUDIES TO EVALUATE THE VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES RELATED TO THE PREVENTION OF DRUG ABUSE WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN. -- BERNAMA 2044/ZCM