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Mahathir-dadah

POLICE TO PREPARE PAPER ON DADAH ABUSE FOR CABINET

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 22⁹⁴ (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today directed the Royal Malaysia Police to prepare a paper for the Cabinet on the necessary measures and additional funds required to fight dadah abuse.

The Cabinet will decide on the appropriate measures to be adopted based on the report, he said.

He said dadah abuse in the country had grown into a major problem.

"It might grow even bigger without tough laws," he told reporters after attending a briefing following a visit to the Bukit Aman police headquarters here.

Dr Mahathir said dadah abuse continued to pose a threat to the country, and that it was necessary for the government to give more attention to tackle the problem. -- more

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It included giving more attention to the rehabilitation of dadah addicts, he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was also necessary for the government to obtain international assistance to fight dadah abuse in the country.

Asked whether dadah abuse in the country had become critical, he said the government considered the problem a serious one.

The prime minister said that though the government had taken steps to overcome the problem, the number of addicts continued to grow.

"We are trying but it looks like more people are getting involved in dadah abuse," he said, adding that it might be because existing facilities, such as the care centres for addicts, were not enough. -- more

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"We do not have enough facilities to give treatment to all (dadah addicts) because their number is increasing every year," he said.

He said he was briefed today that there were more than 180,000 people involved in dadah abuse, and 78,000 of them were hardcore addicts.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Home Minister, said the care centres in the country can only accommodate 10,000 people, and the remaining 60,000 or so cannot be given treatment.

"Our prisons also hold a large number of dadah addicts," he said.

Asked whether the government would increase the number of care centres to accommodate all the addicts, he said not only the centres must be increased but also the staff administering them.

Dr Mahathir said the government had to increase the number of staff at care centres to tackle the dadah abuse problem though the government was careful about creating new posts.

In the three-hour visit to Bukit Aman, Dr Mahathir was briefed by the various heads of department.

Also present were Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor and other senior police officers. -- Bernama

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