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BN Youth wings joining to fight the menace

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Youth wings of the Barisan Nasional parties will work together with the MCA to combat the use of Ecstasy pills.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said: "This close co-operation differentiates us from the Opposition. And with this co-operation, we hope to overcome the Ecstasy scourge.

"This effort should indeed be a shared responsibility... we must have Smart partnership."

Hishammuddin, who is also Youth and Sports Minister, said he was seeing close co-operation with MCA Youth, especially since his deputy at the ministry was Datuk Ong Tee Keat, the movement's chief.

Ong was also present at the Press conference. He heads the MCA Youth task force to fight Ecstasy abuse. Earlier, Ong had announced the opening of an Anti-Gejala Sosial hotline.

Hishammuddin said youth groups must not adopt conventional methods to solve Ecstasy abuse since it was a new menace with different traits compared with other drugs.

He also revealed that the newly set-up Social Ills Working Committee under the National Youth Consultative Council was preparing a report for submission to the council in October.

"Once the report has been studied, we hope to formulate methods to fight Ecstasy abuse," he said, adding that the study was also looking into stiffer punishment for Ecstasy-related offences and consultative measures.

He urged non-governmental organisations to participate in fighting Ecstasy abuse and said the effort would need expert views.

Earlier, Hishammuddin said "Bulan Kemerdekaan", a month-long celebration in conjunction with National Day, was to remind the people of the country's history and to instil the patriotic spirit.

It would be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 17 to mark the 43rd National Day on Aug 31. The celebrations would go on until Sept 16, and during this time a flag-waving campaign would be carried out.

Several events would take place at the launch including performances by brass bands from schools, the armed forces and City Hall; a motorised paragliding show; motorcycle parade; and a choir presentation by 250 trainees from teachers' training colleges.

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