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Drugs-Women

5,000 WOMEN TO ATTEND BIGGEST EVER ANTI-DRUG COLLOQUIUM

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 13 (Bernama) -- Some 5,000 women will participate in the biggest ever anti-drug colloquium held in Malaysia, focusing on women's involvement in efforts to check drug abuse which remains a major problem in this country.

The three-day colloquium beginning on Friday at the Genting International Convention Centre on Genting Highlands, is aimed at creating awareness, disseminating information and making Malaysian women conscious of the seriousness and undesirable consequences of drug abuse as well as the danger of AIDS to themselves, their families and the surrounding community.

Chairman of the National Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (Pemadam), Datin Paduka Rakibah Abdul Manap said even though most of the drug addicts in Malaysia were male, anti-drug efforts on the part of women were also very important in line with their role as loving and caring persons, motivators and facilitators in the family institution and society at large.

The participants would include 1,000 secondary schoolgirls and an equal number of counselling teachers representing every secondary school in the country, she told Bernama.

The colloquium, which will be entered in the Malaysia Book of Records as the biggest ever held, will dwell on the problem of drug abuse. It will be opened by the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will preside at the closing ceremony on Sunday.

Rakibah said the colloquium would also deliberate on ways to maximise women's involvement in the dissemination of information and knowledge on drug abuse preventive measures among families, friends and society.

An anti-drug exhibition themed "Power of Love" will be held in conjunction with the colloquium covering four major aspects -- a drug free family, a drug free school, a drug free workplace and a drug free society.

"This is in line with the government's objective to make Malaysia a drug free nation by 2015," Rakibah said.

According to the latest statistics, a total of 26,799 drug addicts was detected between January and November last year nationwide comprising 13,935 or 52 per cent new addicts and 12,862 or 48 per cent repeat addicts.

Rakibah said 98.72 per cent of the people involved in drug abuse were men.

"This phenomenon should be checked and monitored so that the total does not keep on increasing every year," she said.

-- BERNAMA

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