

**Crucial For Malaysia To Protect Children From Drug Threat And Substance Abuse – Najib  
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PUTRAJAYA, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- It is crucial for Malaysia to protect its children from the threat of drugs and substance abuse, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today.

He said it was also vital for the nation to uphold and defend the United Nations Children's Right Convention since Malaysia has a very young population.

"We are continuously challenged by the ever changing multi-faceted scourge of drug and substance abuse.

"The threat of opium, ganja or cannabis, morphine, heroin, alcohol, tobacco, glue-sniffing, designer drugs, ketum leaves, amphetamine-type stimulant, e-cigarette and vaping which are treacherous, vicious and dangerous ways of destroying the social fabric of our communities in particular the future of our young," he said.

Najib said this at the launch of the 26th International Federation of NGOs (Non-Government Organisation) for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO) conference and the concurrent 22nd IFNGO ASEAN NGO's Workshop here Monday.

His speech was read by the Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister Tan Sri Shukry Mohd Salleh.

Najib also proudly announced that ASEAN was the first region to collectively declare war against drugs and enunciated its commitment to ASEAN Drug-Free 2015.

In addition, he said the regional grouping used to lead the world in the field of Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse.

"Sadly, now that we are approaching the end of 2015, none of the ASEAN nations has achieved Drug-Free Status.

"I am heartened however to learn that this conference will make a comprehensive review of the problem and draw up action plans for the way forward," he said.

In the context of ASEAN, Najib said the recently concluded 26th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur had adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the People Oriented, People Centered ASEAN.

Meanwhile, the prime minister has also recognised and paid tribute to the indispensable role of NGOs which combined with the efforts of governments, in promoting drug-free communities through its dedication and commitment.

"There is no shortage of the so-called 'enlightened liberals who are blind to the blight caused by the multi-faceted ill-effects of 'Gateway Drugs' of Alcohol and Tobacco.

"They even advocate for the decriminalisation of drugs and to put it bluntly legalising drug abuse. This unhealthy and counter-productive trend demands the undivided attention of every concerned individuals in every community to earnestly promote Healthy Wholesome Communities- No Drugs," he noted.

On the three-day conference, Najib hoped the participants from 20 nations would leave enriched with new ideas and new directions invigorated with determined resolve to fight the scourge of drug and substance abuse.

The three-day conference provides a venue for the exchange and sharing of information, ideas, innovative modalities for the prevention of drug and substance abuse.

There will be several plenary sessions and two workshops, covering topics like the global drug abuse crisis, children's rights against drugs and substance, and empowering family and community.

It would also talk about the role of youths, government and private sectors' involvement to achieve a drug-free community.

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