

**Drug-Related NGOs should give Priority to Outcome of Anti-drug Programmes – Ahmad Zahid
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 22 (Bernama) -- Drug-related non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been advised to give priority to the outcome of their anti-drug programmes.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said this was because despite the various activities and programmes carried out by the NGOs and government agencies to combat drug abuse, the number of drug addicts remained more or less the same each year.

"We have to look not only at the output or at how many organizations we have and how many activities we organized or how much money we spent.

"But we have to look at the outcome...the outcome of the funds allocated by the government, as well as the outcome of the smart partnership forged between the NGOs and the government's rehabilitation centres," he said when opening the Malaysian Substance Abuse Council (MASAC) and National Recovery Symposium here today.

At the event, Ahmad Zahid who is also Home Minister, also announced an allocation of RM2 million to MASAC as an annual grant to carry out various anti-drug programmes.

MASAC comprises 60 NGOs and private rehabilitation centres which are active in carrying out anti-drug activities and programmes, as well as treatment and rehabilitation.

Ahmad Zahid said he would also like to see the outcome of MASAC's establishment through the fund provided.

"From now on, we will close the old book and open a new one. In Sarawak, I have announced this year for an All-Out War against drugs, I'm confident that I'm not alone in this. I know you all can do a good job," he said.

The deputy prime minister said it was also high time for the NGOs and other relevant quarters to work together to combat drug abuse and to help rehabilitate the addicts with various methods and approaches.

"We are all assets to the country. If one becomes a drug addict, the asset will turn into liability. A liability to the society, parents, social institution and country," he added.

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