

Absolutely NOT!

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> **Zahid: We WON'T**  
comply with any  
international resolution  
to **LEGALISE** use of  
some drugs

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia will stand firm against any move to legalise the use of narcotics in the country.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the government will not compromise on this although there are resolutions made by international bodies to legalise the use of some drugs.

"Our government's stand is as long as drug addiction is not 100% eradicated, social problems and crimes due to drug addiction will continue to occur," he said.

Opening the Drug Prevention Association Malaysia (Pemadam) 42nd annual general meeting yesterday, he said the government views legalising the use of drugs as unorthodox.

As such, Malaysia will not comply with any resolution passed by any world body, including the United Nations, to legalise the use of narcotics.

The UN and the World Health Organisation had in a joint statement in June, called for the review and repealing of laws that criminalise drug use and possession of drugs for personal use, among other things.

Ahmad Zahid also said despite its best efforts, the government had failed to effectively combat the drug problem in the



REUTERSPIX

**FIRE 'BEAST'** ... Firefighters keep watch on the raging wildfire outside Montecito, California on Saturday. The so-called Thomas Fire, powered by fierce winds, has grown into the third-largest in state history since erupting on Dec. 4. "It is a beast but we will kill it," Santa Barbara County Fire Department Division Chief Martin Johnson said.

TURN TO PAGE 03 ▶

## 'Tackle drug issue holistically'

► FROM FRONT PAGE

country. Sometimes, we feel our efforts are enough, but it is not. That is why we failed," he said.

"We have to admit we have failed. We must look back, and ask ourselves where we went wrong. We must not have a 'denial syndrome'."

"Although our enforcement agencies were allocated billions of ringgit, the number of drug addicts continue to increase."

He noted that drug addiction cases have increased by 14% from 26,668 cases in 2015 to 30,847 in 2016, and 58% of prisoners nationwide are those convicted for drug-related offences.

"We have to acknowledge that those involved in drugs have outsmarted us. We need to outsmart them, and not just look at

one part of the issue," he said.

Ahmad Zahid called for a fresh holistic approach to address the issue of drug abuse, with all quarters, including state governments, non-governmental organisations (NGO) and the public working together.

He said this is pertinent, especially now that drug manufacturers and traffickers are turning to synthetic drugs, that can be produced anywhere, including domestic homes.

At the event, Ahmad Zahid also announced an annual allocation of RM10 million for Pemadam and anti-drug NGOs for drug eradication programmes.

However, he warned that the allocation would be retracted if drug cases do not decrease by 50% by the end of next year.



Ahmad Zahid receiving a souvenir from Nur Jazlan (second from left) at the launch of the 42nd Malaysian Drug Prevention Association general assembly yesterday.