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## 'War against drugs yet to be won'

TOUGH FIGHT

# 'WAR AGAINST DRUGS YET TO BE WON'

We will not bow to world body to legalise use of drugs, says Zahid

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**T**HE government has acknowledged that its war against drugs has proven to be unsuccessful.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said this was due to the continued increase in the number of users and addicts as well as those jailed for drug-related offences over the years.

He said 58 per cent of convicts were jailed for drug-related crimes, while addicts increased by 14 per cent last year.

The number of addicts last year was 30,847, while in 2015, the number was 26,668, he said at the Malaysian Drug Prevention Association's (Pemadam) 42nd an-



nual general assembly here yesterday.

As for new addicts, the number had increased from 20,281 to 22,295 in the same time span, said Zahid, who is also home minister.

He said combating drug abuse had not been successful, although efforts had been made and a lot of funds spent on it.

Zahid said one of the factors was due to placing the responsibility to eradicate the problem on the government when it required a joint effort involving various parties, including the family institution and community.

He urged enforcement agencies and non-governmental organisations involved in drug prevention and rehabilitation of ad-

dicts to collaborate in identifying more holistic approaches in combating drug production and trafficking, hence helping to eradicate drug abuse.

He said this was because the trend now was producing and trafficking synthetic drugs, which were difficult to detect, but would have more detrimental effects on addicts compared with

traditional drugs.

"We must set aside our differences and take drastic action because from traditional drugs like cannabis, heroin and morphine, users have turned to synthetic drugs, the making of which can be learnt off the Internet and made at home," Zahid said.

At a press conference later, Zahid said Malaysia would not bow to any resolution passed by any world body, including the United Nations, to legalise the use of narcotics.

He said any effort to legalise the use of such drugs was seen to be outside the norm as it could give rise to more social problems and crime.

"The Malaysian government will not compromise on this, even though there are resolutions made by international bodies to legalise the use of dangerous drugs.

"The government's stand is that for as long as drug addiction is not eradicated, social problems and crime due to drug addiction will continue to occur," he said.

*Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi speaking at the Malaysian Drug Prevention Association's (Pemadam) 42nd annual general assembly in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY ASYRAF HAMZAH*