

**NO quick fix**

22 APRIL 2016

# NO quick fix

**500 people PICKED UP DAILY** for suspected drug abuse and drug-related offences

BY CHARLES RAMENDRAN  
 newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Drug abuse and trafficking see an average of 530 people being arrested daily for various related offences across the country.

According to police, a total of 63,382 individuals, of whom less than 5% were foreigners, had been hauled up in connection with 36,585 cases between Jan 1 and April 17 this year.

They included 42,555 who had tested positive for drug abuse, 14,475 picked up on suspicion of having drugs in their possession and 6,352 suspected of trafficking.

With detention centres and police lock-ups holding inmates by the thousands for a mix of other criminal offences, where are these suspected drug case offenders ending up?

As alarming as it may appear, not all are drug lords or kept in confinement.

Apparently, a sizeable number are freed daily in accordance with the law after the process of investigations is completed. This is because, according to police, those hauled up include innocent parties such as friends, family



File photo of drug addicts rounded up by the authorities.

BERNAMA/PIX

members and staff who are detained together with drug offenders.

Often these individuals are released after evidence shows their non-involvement and clears them of wrongdoings.

Police said it was necessary to detain such individuals as it was difficult to ascertain their involvement at the point of their arrest until investigations are completed.

There are also those who had to be released or escape action due to the lack of evidence to press charges against them.

A large percentage of the tens of thousands detained are either

drug users or those in possession of small amounts of narcotics.

Federal Narcotics Crimes Investigation Department (NCID) director Datuk Seri Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff told *theSun* yesterday that these offenders were eligible for bail in accordance with the law and are freed after being charged in court or while they await court action pending the outcome of conclusive test results for drug abuse.

"We arrest them and take them to court but when they claim trial, the law allows bail. Hence, most times these drug users are back on the streets. They do not turn over a new leaf but head straight back

to their old ways. Of course, we face some constraints in some aspects but the government is very supportive.

"Lately, we had asked for a narcotics court to expedite drug cases and it was approved. We are cooperating with other countries and we need the public to fight alongside us by providing information on drug activities they are aware of. We will look into every information we receive. There is a serious need to put an end to this growing problem," he added.

Those denied bail are the ones who had committed serious drug

TURN TO PAGE 06 ▶

## Drugs worth RM65m seized

▶ FROM FRONT PAGE

offences and face penalties such as the death sentence, life or long-term imprisonment.

Based on the latest statistics, only 2% or 1,587 of the 36,585 cases, are under this category classified under three provisions, namely Section 39B (trafficking above 200g of banned drugs), Section 39A(2) (trafficking of drugs between 50g and 200g) and Section 6B (cultivation of



Mokhtar

cannabis or source plants of banned drugs) of the Dangerous Drugs Act are non-bailable.

Police said the suspects in 1,332 cases or 80% of the 1,587 cases have been charged in court while the rest are in custody pending police investigations.

Statistics show that a variety of banned drugs worth RM65.64 million were seized this year.

Almost 200,000 people are detained every year for narcotics related cases.