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Students turn into cheap drug 'mules'

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Top News

# Students turn into cheap drug 'mules'

By Kenneth Tee  
kenneth@mmail.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Children, as young as seven, are being used by drug syndicates to run their distribution networks.

**Why?**

- Cheap labour.
- Easy to manipulate them and turn into drug "mules".
- Young minds unaware of the risks.

Students from primary and secondary schools and those pursuing tertiary education have become unknowing agents in the drug menace as syndicates and drug traffickers try to outsmart the authorities.

Federal Narcotics Crime Investigation Department director Commissioner Datuk Seri Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff said 331 students of various ages were nabbed for being involved in drug distribution this year alone.

This included one primary school student, 133 secondary school students while the rest were college and university students.

Mokhtar said the primary school student was arrested and placed in a juvenile school as he was a minor.

"We consider the student as a victim of crime and he had no idea what he was transporting. The boy didn't know the contents of the package he was carrying," he said.

Mokhtar said traffickers would use

students to deliver parcels to avoid arousing the suspicion of the authorities.

"They would usually tell an unsuspecting student to deliver a package (filled with drugs) to an individual at a specific address. They get paid once the delivery is done."

Mokhtar said these students, mostly from poor families, were manipulated by the traffickers to distribute drugs. Children and teenagers are considered cheap labour to drug syndicate members, he said.

"A trafficker approaches you and tells you the mobile phone that you have been dreaming of is within your grasp just by delivering a package. It would be difficult to reject such an opportunity," Mokhtar said, adding this was how traffickers enticed kids.

Mokhtar, however, acknowledged that some of the secondary school students knew they were transporting drugs.

He said the type of drugs transported varied, depending on the locations. Synthetic drugs such as syabu and Erimin pills were prevalent in urban areas whereas ganja and ketum were common in rural areas.

"Some of the elder students are also tasked to sell the drugs."

Mokhtar said police were working closely with the National Anti-Drug Agency and the Education Ministry to eradicate the problem.

"The issue of drugs-involving students is a primary concern and it is our top priority to combat the menace."



Mokhtar (left) and Selangor Customs Director Datuk Sharif Ismail show how drugs were stashed in laptop backpacks during a press conference in Bukit Aman yesterday. — Picture by Azneal Jshak

## Police nab Nigerians, seize drugs worth RM400,000

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Police arrested two Nigerians and seized syabu worth RM400,000 in Kepong last Thursday.

Federal Narcotics Crime Investigation Department director Commissioner Datuk Seri Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff said the drugs were shipped into the country from China.

The suspects, aged 31 and 33, were detained after the Special Tactical Intelligence Narcotics Group raided their home in Taman Pusat Kepong at 4.15pm.

The drugs, weighing 5.08kg, were stashed in laptop backpacks. Mokhtar said the suspects had falsely declared four boxes — which contained 47 backpacks — that were brought in through cargo as housing appliances.

He said the arrests were made possible thanks to the sharing of intelligence between the National Narcotics Control Commission of China, Royal Malaysian Customs Department and the police.

The drugs were meant for the local market and could have been sold to at least 2.5 million users.

Records showed 364 Nigerians were arrested since 2015 for their involvement in drug-related offences.

Mokhtar yesterday rubbished an article by an Indonesian portal accusing police of not cooperating with their counterparts in the Republic in combating drug smuggling activities.

The March 24 article quoted a National Indonesian Police senior enforcement

officer saying Malaysia failed to show its commitment to work together on the matter.

Mokhtar said police, had on Jan 13, provided Indonesian authorities information which led to the crackdown of a drug laboratory in Jakarta recently.

**Nigerians detained for drug-related offences**

2015	139 suspects
2016	172
Jan 1 - April 13, 2017	53

**DRUGS SEIZED AND ARRESTS FROM JAN 1-APRIL 13**

Drugs seized worth **RM81.67 million**  
Assets confiscated **RM49.16 million**  
Total arrests **55,903 people**

**BREAKDOWN**

Supplying **7,519**  
Possession **16,965**  
Consumption **31,419**  
Locals **53,599**  
Foreigners **2,304**

**STUDENTS NABBED**

**2017 (Jan 1-April 13)**

Primary school pupil **One**  
Secondary school students **133**  
College/university students **197**  
Total **331**

**2016**

Primary school pupils **Two**  
Secondary school students **446**  
College/university students **539**  
Total **987**

**2015**

Primary school students **Four**  
Secondary school students **439**  
College/university students **378**  
Total **821**