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Close to 80 percent drug addicts are employed: Johari

By SHIRLEY POILIS
shirley@newsabahtimes.com.my

KOTA KINABALU: A total of 9,813 persons from close to 80 per cent of total drug addicts in the country are employed.

Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) director, Datuk Ir. Dr. Johari Basri said statistics presented in the context of Occupational Safety and Health, it was estimated that 8 of every 10 people infected with HIV / AIDS, and drug abuse have jobs.

"General labour, sales, service, construction, agriculture and fisheries sectors are the largest contributor which is at 79.6% of the working masses," he said at the launching of the Code of Practice on Prevention and Management of HIV / AIDS in the workplace & Code of Practice and the eradication of drug abuse prevention, alcohol and substance in the workplace held here yesterday.

"This is a guideline to employers and employees in dealing with issues related to HIV / AIDS and drug abuse, and alcohol in the workplace," he said.

Employers should be aware that HIV / AIDS and drug abuse is one of the issues of work and it is classified as a disease that must be addressed.

Under Section 15 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994, employers are responsible for ensuring the safety, health and welfare of its employees.

While Section 24 (1) of the same Act is clear that employees are responsible to take reasonable care for safety and health of him and others who may be affected by its actions in the workplace.

AIDS or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is a condition in which the immune system, losing its ability to fend off infection and thus become vulnerable to opportunistic infections and certain types of cancer, the condition is caused by infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

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Therefore, the code of practice is intended to reduce the spread of this disease and guide employers and employees in dealing with issues relating to HIV / AIDS in the workplace, Johari said.

This is necessary because HIV / AIDS not only affect the workforce in terms of productivity and motivation, but also the workplace is a key part of the local community.

Employers have a significant role to play in the wider struggle to contain the outbreak and effects of this disease in the workplace.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Health, as of December 2009, there were 87 710 people infected with HIV.

Of these, 90.8% were males and 9.2% are women. Furthermore, there were 13,394 cases of AIDS deaths to date in December 2009.

Starting in 2002, the number of new reported HIV cases has decreased year by year until the end of 2009.

Today in Malaysia, there are nine new cases of HIV each day.

According to projections, the number of people infected with HIV will rise to about 119 471 people by 2015.

A total of 70.6% of the total reported HIV cases were infected through drug abuse is the use of needles.

Things should be emphasized here is that of 82.2% of persons infected with HIV are from the working masses, he added.

The launch of the National Strategic Plan of drug-free in 1998 proved the seriousness of this government to make Malaysia drug-free country by 2015.

According to statistics released by the National Drug Information System (NADI), a total of 12 352 drug addicts were detected nationwide in 2008 compared to 14,489 in 2007. This represents a decrease of 14.75%. A total of 97.8% of the total are men.

Trends for the ten-year period, from 1999 to 2008 involving the amount of drug detected in the country have shown a significant reduction of more than 50%.

It should be noted that the total number of drug addicts in Malaysia until December 2008, a total of 10 860 which is 87.9% of people aged 20 to 49 years.



Director General of Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Datuk Ir. Dr. Johari Basri (centre) during the opening ceremony of the Code of Practice on Prevention and management of HIV/AIDS in the workplace & Code of practice and the eradication of drug abuse prevention, alcohol and substance in the workplace