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Three million 1Malaysia Squad volunteers ready to battle drug abuse

KAJANG: About three million volunteers from the National Anti-Drugs Agency (AADK) and various agencies under the Home Ministry have been roped in to fight drug abuse in the country.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said the team, known as the 1Malaysia Squad, would offer treatment to addicts and help them find employment.

"We need a new vision, direction, strategy and approach in the war against drugs," he said at the launch of the 1Malaysia Squad and opening of the new AADK headquarters here yesterday.

Hishammuddin said police enforcement in the battle against

drug abuse had led to 146,942 arrests last year. Of the total, he said, 137,241 arrests involved addicts while the remaining 9,701 were drug dealers.

He also said that RM658mil worth of drugs had been confiscated in the country in the past two years.

Malaysia, he said, had been recognised by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) for its efforts against drug abuse.

The WHO, in its "Good Practices in Asia: Effective Paradigm Shifts Towards Improved National Response to Drug & HIV/AIDS" reports early this year, commended Malaysia's "Cure and Care" approach to-

wards drug addicts.

The method is used in the Cure and Care Service Centres run by AADK to help drug addicts, sex workers and the homeless through 27 centres nationwide.

