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PETALING JAYA: After spending a major part of his life tracking down criminals, Datuk Zaman Khan (*pic*) is spending retirement giving back to society especially in the areas of drug prevention and most recently HIV/AIDS awareness.

Now, at age 69, he has assumed the role of the new Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) president, replacing Prof Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman.

"I had expressed to Adeeba, who am I compared to (Datin Paduka) Marina (Mahathir, the first MAC president) or her? I am just a retired cop.

"But they have confidence in me. Besides, they will give me guidance and direction. I am excited. I take this as a challenge."

Incidentally, Zaman is also the first male president of the MAC. He was previously vice-president.

Zaman, who attributed his desire to help people to the fact that he comes from a poor family, thinks nothing of answering critics of harm reduction programmes.

He relates an encounter with various enforcement agencies a few months ago in



which a police officer questioned him on whether he also distributed condoms.

"I told him, 'yes' because our duty is not to encourage (promiscuity) but to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS," he added.

"Another policeman wrote me that it was immoral to give needles and syringes. But I told him that it was even more immoral not to help. We are not encouraging the use of drugs."

Zaman, who was the former Prisons Department director-general and CID chief, said his main focus for MAC was to bring down the number of infections among women.

"We will do it by hook or by crook," he said, adding this included obtaining more funding, educating women in the rural areas and roping in more volunteers, especially retired nurses and doctors.

The jovial man also thinks nothing of driving alone to attend functions on HIV/AIDS in places like Kelantan or Johor.

"I can't afford a driver," he laughed, adding, "I stop and sleep at mosques, police stations or petrol stations when I get tired. If a person takes six hours to get to Kota Baru, I will take between eight and nine hours."