

Call to create awareness on dangers of firecrackers, fireworks

KUALA LUMPUR: A special campaign using the hashtag #Raya without firecrackers' must be initiated to enhance the awareness and dangers of firecrackers and fireworks, especially during festive seasons.

Professor Datin Dr Norizan Abdul Razak from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, said through such a campaign, the number of incidents involving firecrackers can be reduced significantly.

"The local media comprising social media, print and electronic media need to play an important role in creating awareness by highlighting the dangers involved while playing with firecrackers.

"They can publish or broadcast stories of victims who have suffered serious injuries while playing with firecrackers or fireworks," she told Bernama.

Dr Norizan said playing with firecrackers is not and should not be a culture in Islam because such time can be used for other activities to keep children occupied, like carrying out religious programmes.

Crime analyst Datuk Akhbar Satar said enforcement at all entry points into the country must be tightened to prevent firecrackers and fireworks from being smuggled into the country, especially during festive seasons.

"Such enforcement must be

carried out in a transparent manner while the integrity of enforcement officers on duty must be monitored to ensure there are no flaws in the system," he said.

Akhbar said though many campaigns and operations are being carried out, the number of injuries involving firecrackers, especially among children, remains a major concern because such incidents are rampant during festive seasons.

In the latest incident in Dungun, Terengganu, a 14-year-old teenager suffered serious injuries while playing with homemade firecrackers.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Customs Department assistant director-general (enforcement division) Datuk Zulkifli Yahya said the department was always alert and vigilant to curb smuggling activities, including firecrackers and fireworks.

"However, smugglers still manage to sneak in firecrackers illegally using all kinds of tactics and sell such products to the people," he said.

Zulkifli said the department had seized firecrackers worth RM550,000 thus far involving 54 cases.

He said the government had only approved the sales of 'Happy Boom' and 'Magic Pop' because both products do not pose any danger to children.-
Bernama