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## Thailand making marijuana legal

BANGKOK - Marijuana decriminalisation activists Friday hailed news that cannabis becomes legal for buying or selling in Thailand. Plus, the government is considering opening an official store selling marijuana in Bangkok.

Pleedee Apiyasakul, founder of a group that advocates for cannabis legalisation, said that it is a good start knowing that the government does not abandon citizens opinion, moreover, officials support majority idea which reveals real democracy.

"I think it will certainly help build a positive image," said Pleedee. "Apart from image, it will help patients. Plus, it will also help the government to gain more money from selling marijuana so that the money will be used to develop country. Even farmers in Thailand will have more opportunity to have more revenue from planting cannabis."

"Fifty years ago, we declared a war on drugs, and in the end, we surrendered. Now, it is not like that anymore. To put it simply: It's about how do we, as a society, live happily with drugs. As we can't get rid of drugs, so why don't we use it in beneficial ways? And today, we prove that drugs is not our enemy if we know how to live with it wisely." said Paiboon Suksai, the head of the justice ministry.

In a legal amendment, marijuana can also be legally used as a medicine. It helps to cure headache and especially cancer. However, "It also creates a debate." said Sarunchana Rodchingcha, Narcotics Control Board director. "Doctors in our country are debating about legalised cannabis. Some of them fear that it may be used by children for recreational use and it might affect their brain development." Sarunchana said.

Luckily, officials also concern about the problem of children using marijuana and drug addiction. So, even though it is legalised, not everyone can use it. The government enforces some limits on sales, including an age requirement (21 or older), how much a person can buy and own at once, the packaging of the product, and taxes.

After legalised marijuana, officials have a plan of opening a state-run monopoly in Bangkok. However, the construction plan is not revealed yet. The council is considering a location and budget. Luckily, it is planned that it will be opened before the end of this year.

Phumipat Sawangwong, Vice president, said that the reason of having an official cannabis shop is to reduce eliminate the black market and produce the best public health outcomes, since

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regulators could directly control prices and customer. Plus, the profit from the store will be used in developing the country.

"We are considering having an official cannabis store in Bangkok where people can be sure that it has good-quality with lower price. We do not want our citizens to be fooled by merchants in black market. Also, tax collected from cannabis will be used to develop the country. So, we expect that it will boost nation's economic."

To conclude, after legalisation, marijuana is expected to be used widely in our society. Hence, everyone needs to use it wisely so that you would not create any problem to the society. You are the owner, don't let drug own you.

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