

# Fertility control vital to the nation's growth, says Mahathir



DEPUTY Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed said today that failure to pay attention to fertility planning would lead to the collapse of the nation.

Minister without Portfolio in the Prime Minister's Department, Tan Sri Chong Hon Nyan read the speech.

He said the drawing up of a fertility programme will ensure "that the new generation will be energetic, rational and dedicated."

He believed that fertility planning is the foundation for a healthy and lively family in society.

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wednesday

Dr. Mahathir was opening a five-day seminar on Fertility Planning Towards Achieving Greater Social and Economic Progress at the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman.

The seminar is held in conjunction with the National Family Planning Board's Tenth Anniversary celebrations.

Dr. Mahathir said that ensuring a healthy family life in the country is the Government's main objective in the social development of the country.

However, he said this responsibility should also be shared by the public and the Government's staff.

He said to date, no sole programme based on fertility control has been drawn up to combat poverty and under-development.

"Therefore, it is important that the seminar discuss the subject in depth and draw up such a programme for implementation," he said.

He said one of the problems of uncontrolled

fertility is the providing of employment for the youth.

According to the statistics, the unemployment figure has risen to 300,000 last year although it has dropped from 7.4 per cent in 1970 to 7 per cent at the end of 1975.

He also advised the rural population not to have large families.

The chairman of the NFPB Tan Sri Abdul Jamil Rais said much more needed to be done

to reduce the population growth rate to two per cent by 1985.

He said the integration programme of the Board with the rural health services will be revised so that its services will be expanded into areas that has not yet been reached.

The "Responsible Parenthood" concept should be the responsibility of the public as it will benefit everybody concerned.