

Go for five,

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says Dr M

— Aim to meet 70 million population target

By LIM KEAN LIANG

HUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Government is “**de-emphasising**” family planning and extending maternity leave and benefits for working mothers up to their fifth child in line with the 70 million target population for Malaysia.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced today that the Cabinet had decided to amend the labour laws to extend the benefits now limited to mothers having their third child.

“This is the first step,” added Dr Mahathir who stressed that emphasis **would** be given to

the need to have more children over a spaced period of time.”

He said the present campaign to **limit population** would stop and this included “**de-emphasising** family planning and limitation on child-birth”.

Dr Mahathir told a Press conference that at the same time the Government wanted to see that there would **be a good and** healthy population.

All these were being done and **the Government** was also looking into other ways too. **He, however,** did not say whether there would be additional income tax relief for working mothers with more children.

He said **there had** been criticisms that a **population** target of 70 million was not realistic but based on the present birth and survival **rates,** the population **would** grow to 35 million in 115 years.

But if based on the **old** **sufficient** funds from the birth rate of 3.2 per cent **increased** revenue to provide for these needs.

per cent with emphasis. However, these could **on** family planning, a **po-** **only** be **realised** if the **population** growth **reaching** people were prepared to 70 million was not **impos-** **work** hard and be more **sible.**

productive so as to in-
Dr Mahathir said **with** **increase** tax revenue. **good** **administrations,** “By more taxes I do not and high rate of **producti-** mean an increase in the **ivity,** a 70 million **popula-** **tax** rate. This can be **tion** would not be a prob- raised through **stimulat-** **lem** but instead be a **ing** **productivity.**”
“source of strength.” Dr Mahathir said he

Land area, too, should be aware that a high proportion of the labour force was made up of increased population.

He explained that the males and for working population had to increase as we need the manpower for our development. "There must be some way to overcome this but then again with the electronic industries going into automation and be-

Revenue

However, the increase coming less labour intensive, the girls working in out conditions." The people must be prepared to work hard and change their "culture" to one based on hard work and trustworthiness. "In a situation where there may be unemployment, it will be good for the girls to have babies

"Having a target population of 70 million is not a ridiculous idea after all," he said.

With this new emphasis to increase the population, the Government had taken into consideration the medical and education needs of a larger population.

"That is why we are rearranging things like passing them to the private sector so that the Government can concentrate on what it does best."

Government expenditure would thus be re-