

Dr M on  
how not

to be

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a bad

parent

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. —  
Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir  
Mohamad has expressed  
concern that children today  
were no longer brought up  
with the proper training  
that would help them cope  
with life's problems.

The Prime Minister criti-  
cised parents who "abdi-  
cate" their parental respon-  
sibilities and thus cause  
much of the ills of the world  
today.

The behaviour of children  
and the ethical values they  
absorbed would determine  
what kind of future they  
would have, he said when  
opening the 5th Asian Con-  
gress of Paediatrics here.

Dr Mahathir also remind-  
ed paediatricians that their  
role was not limited to the  
care of physical and mental  
health of children but also  
to help in their development  
into good citizens.

"These are not everyth-  
ing. If their upbringing is  
such that they absorb all the  
wrong values and ideas,  
they may end up as burdens  
to society.

"On the other hand, if  
they are imbued with the  
right spirit and the higher  
values, then not only will  
they be assets to society,  
but they will help shape the  
success and glory of so-  
ciety," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said  
that mothers of today were  
a confused lot.

"Between their desire to  
discipline their children  
and their abhorrence of  
child bashing, they are com-  
pletely lost.

"I am also against child  
bashing, but light punish-  
ment should be meted out to  
remind them that 'crime'  
brings punishment.

"Many mothers feel that  
children are too small to un-  
derstand and should not be  
punished because they are  
ignorant."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir ad-  
mitted that medical doctors  
do not make good politi-  
cians as "they are too prone  
to lecture people as they do  
to their patients."

"They think they know  
enough to tell everyone  
what they ought to do," he  
said drawing laughter from  
more than 700 delegates.

"You will have to excuse  
me for this lecture on what  
you ought to do. It is merely  
that I am a doctor, though a  
renegade from the profes-  
sion.

"I just cannot resist the  
opportunity to tell you what  
you ought to do," he said to  
more laughter.