

DRUG LAWS APPLY TO ALL

STAR 27 JUN 1986

Anyone who breaks our laws will have to pay accordingly, irrespective of colour, creed, their philosophy or nationality.

— Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday

By YEOH GUAN JIN

BUKIT MERTAJAM, Thurs. — Malaysian laws against drug abuse apply to all, irrespective of colour, religion or nationality, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said these stiff laws had been enforced to protect the people and "we will not be apologetic for them."

"Anyone who breaks our laws will

have to pay accordingly, irrespective of colour, creed, their philosophy or nationality," he said during a visit to a drug rehabilitation centre near here.

Dr Mahathir said that anyone who committed a crime in this country would be tried here.

Like in the BMF case, he said, Malaysia had to allow other countries to try

those involved because our laws did not apply in those countries.

"We accept that if a crime is committed by a Malaysian in another country, we cannot act.

"Therefore those who commit a crime here will be subject to our laws," he said when asked to comment on the case of two Australians sentenced to death for

drug trafficking.

Kevin Barlow and Brian Chambers were found guilty of trafficking in 179gm of heroin at the Penang airport. Last Saturday, the Penang Pardons Board rejected their appeals for clemency. (See Page 3).

Dr Mahathir, who took over as Home Minister recently, said many people had tried to champion the cause of those who had brought problems into the country.

"But who are going to champion the cause of those who have become victims of these problems, like the drug addicts and their families?"

He said the drug problem was now the country's number one problem.

"It is even more serious than the communist threat."

He described drug traffickers as "murderers" because they had caused the death of many addicts while those who survived were mere "living skeletons."

He said the country should be firm in trying to wipe out the drug menace with the co-operation of other countries.

Dr Mahathir said addicts were useless to society and could not be trusted.

He said a lot of money had been spent to pay for the rehabilitation of addicts and to pay for the crimes they committed.

"But most of them return to drugs soon after leaving the centres. Many of them could not be accepted by society or their families and were brought back to drug addiction by their friends," he said.