

Dr M: The time may be right
for new law on cleanliness

Community service for litterbugs

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IPOH, Sun. — Those caught littering may have to clean up the mess besides paying a fine. The Government is looking into the possibility of introducing legislation to enforce this.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in voicing the need for such a law today, said it would not only be a lesson to the public but also help develop a positive attitude towards cleanliness.

"There are times when the Government is forced to take legal action to discipline the people on cleanliness and health.

"Perhaps, the time has come to have a new anti-litter law.

"Possibly, under this law, anyone caught littering will be fined and required to clean up the areas they litter," he said when launching the nationwide 'Clean and Beautiful' campaign.

The theme of the five-year campaign is **Rakyat Bersih, Negara Sihat**.

Dr Mahathir said this punishment was not unusual as it was already practised in some developed countries.

Calling for total commitment from the people towards cleanliness, he said litter also had its economic and employment potential as a billion-ringgit "recycling" industry.

In Malaysia, the amount of litter discarded per day is about 10,500 tonnes or 0.7kg per person.

Rubbish like metal, glass, paper and other materials can be processed and reused.

Dr Mahathir said one of the activities of the nationwide cam-

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paign involved the recycling of metal products like discarded cars and aluminium items.

Under the campaign, people will be encouraged to sell discarded cars and other steel products to steel mills like Perwaja Steel in Terengganu.

This will enable the steel mill to have sufficient scrap iron, thereby reducing imports which will lead to savings in foreign exchange.

The same can be done for other types of garbage like wood, bot-

ties, cardboard and other items.

Dr Mahathir said for this move to succeed, households would be asked to co-operate by packing items which could be recycled in separate garbage bags.

Besides generating business and employment opportunities, the recycling industry will help reduce the c&t of living.

Garbage can also be used to generate electricity.

The Prime Minister said it was important to inculcate cleanliness as a way of life.

There is no point selling Malaysia as a clean and beautiful country to tourists overseas if we do not live up to the image.

Maintaining cleanliness will also lead to higher productivity as people's health will improve.

Dr Mahathir said although the cleanliness situation had improved, there was still room for improvement.

For example, Kuala Lumpur has now emerged as the cleanest city in the country and others should follow suit.

At the ceremony, the Prime Minister handed over posters for the campaign to State Education director Haji Osman Jaffar, and representatives of hawkers' associations.

Later, he was taken to see an exhibition of photographs on cleanliness.

He also saw a display of equipment for cleaning operations by the private sector.