

Government to give adequate dental care

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Dental practitioners have been urged to continually upgrade their professional services and keep abreast with developments in the field to meet the growing demand for dental health service in the country.

In making the call, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said, it was the Government's intention to provide adequate dental health service to the people.

"Like the medical profession, dental practitioners make an important contribution towards uplifting the health of the community.

"Since the wellbeing of the people is very much dependent on their good health, the Government hopes to provide adequate dental care for the people."

he said at the launch of the Commonwealth Dental Association here today.

The association comprising national dental associations of the Commonwealth countries is formed to extend co-operation to member countries on ways to tackle problems involving dental care and to co-ordinate training and exchange of expertise.

Also present at the launch were Health Minister Datuk Lee Kim Sai, the president of the association, S. Prince Apabio of Nigeria, Malaysian Dental Association president A. Ratnanesan and president of the International Dental Federation Dr Ruperto Gonzalez-Giralda.

Dr Mahathir said with the improvement in the living standards of the people, the

demand for better dental health care would also increase and urged dental practitioners to be prepared for it.

"As knowledge in health and dentistry is ever increasing and changing, the role of this Commonwealth Dental Association is particularly significant in the area of continuing education.

"In this respect, an association such as this can provide the right forum for the exchange of information and experience amongst member countries," said Dr Mahathir.

He hoped in the attempt to address the worldwide problems confronting oral health, the association would take into the consideration the differing needs

and capabilities of the respective countries.

"For this reason, the objective of the coming together of the national dental associations must be clearly defined, deliberated upon, documented and actively pursued.

"The formation of the association should bring benefit not only to the more advanced countries with greater influence, but equally so to the smaller nations striving to achieve a better standard of oral health.

"The more than one billion population within the member countries must ultimately derive some benefit in the formation of the association, otherwise, this whole effort would not be worthwhile," he added.