

▼25/08/16-48MST

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FIGHT NEGATIVE INFLUENCES THROUGH ORGANISED, ACADEMIC APPROACH, SAYS PM Mahathir - women

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today advised women to adopt an academic and more organised approach in facing negative influences arising out of their participation in the nation's economic growth and modernisation.

He said the role of women was important in the efforts to turn Malaysia into a developed nation by the year 2020 but, at the same time, women had to overcome negative influences to avoid destruction of the character of society as had happened in the West.

+We have only a short time and there is so much to be done to preserve healthy feminine values so that our success will not destroy the character of our society,+ he said at the 30th Women's Day assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre, here.

The assembly of more than 2,500 women representing various organisations is the first organised by the government. Past gatherings had been organised by non-governmental organisations.

Dr Mahathir cited one of the negative influences as the dilemma women found themselves in having to choose between a job and raising a family. -- more

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Mahathir - women 2 Kuala Lumpur

In this connection, he suggested the revival of the +extended family+ concept whereby parents, in-laws or siblings lived together and helped to look after the children.

+The mother-in-law is not as evil as she is portrayed to be in dramas, on television, in films or novels particularly from the West,+ he said.

He said one could engage a foreign maid but there was the fear that the children might grow up inclined towards foreign culture and they might be weak in their mother tongue or even lose it altogether.

+There is a great possibility that they will become disoriented and be unable to adapt themselves to Malaysian society, and they will be denied of total motherly love which can result in their not understanding their responsibility towards their own children in the future,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that young girls should not be prohibited from working in factories for the sole reason that they might get involved in undesirable activities. -- more

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CNS1253

U GE 25-08 00156 EB168

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Mahathir - women 3 Kuala Lumpur

He said their resources were very necessary for industrialisation and national development, and also to help reduce the family's financial burden.

On top of that, he said, they would be better able to learn about life in a modern world and acquire skills and knowledge to become citizens who can equally compete with others.

+What is necessary is their participation in healthy pursuits which involve sports, clubs, religious classes and social activities that can help them utilise their spare time without having to succumb to boredom,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir suggested that women's social organisations and factory managements help provide facilities for them to engage in these activities.

He said the traditional roles of the woman as the mother and housewife and the man as the bread-winner could no longer apply in modern Malaysian society. -- more

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CNS1278

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Mahathir - women 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

This was because the resources of women were also required in efforts to develop the country, he said, adding that the role of women in society should not be reduced but increased instead.

Dr Mahathir said the men would have to admit that women sometimes outperformed them in education and business.

He also said that men should not exploit the non-militant attitude of Malaysian women, adding that people who were eligible for promotion should not be denied the opportunity just because they were women.

Dr Mahathir said it was a blessing that women in the country, although clamouring for equal rights, did not resort to extreme measures such as women in the West.

Women in the West, in demanding equal rights, were prepared to lose their femininity until they were no longer women, men or transvestites but worse, he said.

By not emulating the Western style +Women's Lib+, women in Malaysia had retained moral values and ethics and thus safeguarded the institutions of marriage and family, he added. -- Bernama

▼25/08/17-12MST