

# PM: We value the family institution

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Government has always emphasised the importance of the family institution because it can contribute to the development of the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said a stable and harmonious family unit could bring about a strong and progressive society.

He said that in facing rapid development, Malaysians must realise the need to maintain positive family values to ensure that negative effects which had brought down developed countries did not happen here.

"We must always strengthen the family institution from the very beginning as this shapes society," Dr Mahathir said in his message in the International Family Year's souvenir programme.

He said the International

Family Year was aimed at increasing society's awareness on the important role of the family.

It was also aimed at increasing the ability of national institutions to form and implement national policies to family and social problems.

Dr Mahathir said new and sophisticated approaches were needed to resolve present-day family problems.

In her speech, National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Napsiah Omar said the Government did not want Malaysian families to be influenced by the decay of social values and civilisation of developed countries.

"As members of society, we have to play our part in strengthening the family institution which is crucial to the development of the society and the nation," she said.