

# PM: We must tackle

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight the country's success had also led to various social problems like *dadah* abuse, *lepak* (loafing) and *boh sia* which had to be checked immediately.

He said with the advent of satellite television and the information superhighway, youths would be ex-

posed to various unhealthy information and values.

"If we are not careful the problems of moral decay among youngsters now haunting the West will reach our doorsteps," he said in his message over radio and television to mark the country's 38th National Day tomorrow.

The social problems plaguing the youths,

though not serious, had come about because many parents had neglected their responsibilities as they pursued luxuries.

"As a result of being neglected, the children do not get the guidance and direction they need in life.

"Although this problem is not so serious, it can become serious if not checked," the Prime Minis-

ter warned.

This was among the problems the people and the nation had to face as a result of rapid economic development, he said.

"We cannot view the matter lightly," he said, adding that slowing down the economy was not the solution "because poverty too has its problems".

He said steps ought to be

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## problems of youth now

taken to ensure that the objective of becoming a developed nation was not tainted as had been the case with some developed countries.

Dr Mahathir said the shortage of manpower had also put pressure on wages and led to increased production costs.

Although the intake of foreign workers had helped

overcome the problem to a certain extent, the move had resulted in a substantial outflow of capital and foreign exchange annually, he said.

He advised the people not to abandon things which had benefited them.

While this did not mean there was no more room for improvement, he said, efforts to improve the

"paths" that had been explored must be done carefully.

Dr Mahathir said what was expected of the people was discipline and the will to do things that brought further benefits in the long term, casting aside the negative aspects.