

PM: It's not music to the ears

SHAH ALAM: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the youth of the country, who will take over the leadership in future, should be wary of influences which have permeated into today's music.

"There is even a rap singer who talks about strangling his girlfriend, locking her up in the car boot and doing unacceptable things to his own mother," he said, in an apparent reference to Eminem who received multiple nominations for Wednesday's Grammy Awards.

"When we listen to such things, we unconsciously tolerate such negative values," the Prime Minister told reporters after addressing a massive youth rally at the Malawati Stadium here yesterday.

'Be wary of foreign influences'

However, the Government has not banned such music because it would have a reverse effect with more people curious to get hold of the banned songs or music, he said.

Dr Mahathir cautioned Malaysian youth to be wary of such foreign culture which characterised hedonism, violence and low morals and coming through the various media, including the Internet and children's songs.

"There is no effective way for the Government to intercept the filth coming on the Internet, in CDs, cassettes and the like.

"Only we ourselves can reject these bad influences. Therefore it is very crucial to

recultivate our own cultures ... to erect walls of good morality," he said.

Dr Mahathir stressed the importance of Malaysians being confident of their own ability because it was such conviction that made them accomplish the extraordinary such as climbing Mount Everest and sailing solo around the globe.

"Have patriotism and we can also accomplish what foreigners can achieve, including in the pursuit of knowledge," he said to the loud applause of the 15,000-strong crowd at *The New Millennium Patriotism Gathering*.

The assembly, with representatives from 71 youth or-

ganisations from all over the country, was organised by the Malaysian Youth Council.

Those present included Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, Selangor Mentri Besar Datuk Dr Mohamed Khir Toyo and MYC president Saifuddin Abdullah.

Commenting on the turnout, Dr Mahathir said it was a good sign and showed that Malaysian youth were aware of their importance in society and the nation.

He also witnessed the creation of a new national record when a choir comprising 2,020 youth sang the national anthem and other patriotic songs. The previous record

for a choir presentation was 1,200 singers.

In his address, the Prime Minister told the youth that, being pillars of the country, they must equip themselves with good ethics and leadership skills.

He reminded the youth of the danger of Malaysians losing their independence again through globalisation.

"The emergence of IT through the spread of Internet usage and other media, such as pop music, may contain messages that can cause you to discard important values and responsibility towards your country.

"The country will be lost if all of us, the adults included, don't have any sense of respect or loyalty to it," he said.