

23 JUL 2001

Mahathir-Values

INCULCATE VIRTUES FROM SMALL, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 23 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said inculcation of virtues has to start from small so that a responsible citizenry averted to crime and violence can eventually evolve.

He said the task educating and bringing up children at home was increasingly neglected as women enjoyed greater opportunities to take up jobs as men.

"Since work takes up much of their time, women will have to make the most of quality time to concentrate on sowing good values in children. Once nurtured with virtues, it will be natural for children to reject vices," he said.

The prime minister said this when launching a campaign against violence in society with the acronym Ombak for "Organisasi Wanita Membanteras Keganasan", a maiden programme which the Women and Family Development Ministry embarked on since it was set up on Jan 17 this year.

Dr Mahathir said drawing up and enforcing legislations alone would not be effective in overseeing society's conduct if its members lacked the awareness for self-control.

"We can draft and enforce laws. But no laws or police force are effective enough in overcoming violence by monitoring everyone's movement all the time," he said.

Dr Mahathir said when Malaysians themselves reject violence, then it would be natural that violence would not gain foothold in the country.

He said present day students, including undergraduates, indulged in violent and other irresponsible acts because they were not brought up with proper values.

"They break laws and commit despicable acts because good and proper values were not sowed in them since infancy," he said.

Dr Mahathir also envisaged increasing role for Malaysian women now that more womenfolk have access to tertiary education, even surpassing the menfolk not only in terms of number but also in terms of acquired skills and efficiency.

"It appears now that the women are more active. As such we they deserved appropriate place. This means increasing role for women in future," he said.

On the campaign, Dr Mahathir hoped it would contribute towards reducing cases of violence.

"This will take time and we have to be patient. The campaign should be sustained. This is the government's hope," he added.

-- BERNAMA

RV RV RYN