

# whipping if there is support

SEPANG, Mon. — Public whipping to punish those who commit incest can be carried out if the people support the move, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

“We have never done such a thing before but if the people support it and give the mandate to the Government, we can do it.”

However, Dr Mahathir felt stiffer penalties were not the solution as laws alone would not stop incest and other social ills. The best defence, he said, was to inculcate society with values and morals.

“Tough laws alone are not sufficient. People know they can be sentenced to death for dadah trafficking but there are still those doing it. But why we don’t take dadah? Because we know it is not good for us. So to curb incest, we must inculcate values.”

He said while the Government strove on imparting values and morals, some quarters were more interested in poisoning the minds of the young to suit their political agenda.

“When we want to do something good, there will be critics labelling the Government as un-Islamic and so on.”

He said efforts to impart religious education had been hampered by certain quarters who misled students with their brand of politics.

He said facilities to study religion could be provided but all these would come to nought if students were led astray by those with ulterior motives.

When people lacked religious knowledge, Dr Mahathir said they could be driven to commit heinous crimes like incest.

“People have become shameless they steal, they took money belonging to Tabung Haji. We have anti-piracy laws and yet people dabble in pirated goods.

“They have no consideration at all. People don’t care about their action as long money can be made.”

Asked whether the availability of pornographic materials like VCDs was a factor behind the increase in incest and rape cases, Dr Mahathir replied:

“Those peddling these items are devoid of morals, they think of the money only. We want to put this to a stop but with the Internet, it is difficult. If we do not build a moral resistance against pornography, there is very little the Government can do.”

On incest, Dr Mahathir said it was sad that many of the cases involved Muslims, adding this should not have happened if they adhered to the teachings of the religion.