

20/05/2003

Dr Mahathir on the only way to rid country of drug scourge

PUTRAJAYA, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today drug abuse, especially among the younger generation, could only be eradicated through the inculcation of good values and proper education.

Dr Mahathir who is also the patron of Pemadam, said the drug menace which had constantly remained as the nation's primary threat, could not be possibly wiped out with severe punishment alone...

"Our laws are very strict, but as in any other cases people still break the law. ... Only the inculcation of good values to our children will prevent them from being hooked on drugs.

"Parents must bring up their children with the understanding that drug abuse is something very filthy (najis). If we create such an awareness from a tender age then our future generation could be safe from the evils of drugs.

"We must impress upon our children that drug abuse will rob them of life," Dr Mahathir said in his speech at a dinner organised by Pemadam at his residence here.

If parents were to teach their children to regard drugs as unclean, dangerous and something which would bring diseases like the incurable HIV/AIDS, it would help in reducing the problem...

"The Government has spent huge amounts of money to rehabilitate drug addicts but most of them return to the damned path after sometime. Not only that, they also indulge in all sorts of crime...

"We have to build a strong personality and good spiritual resistance to enable our children to reject drugs."

Congratulating Pemadam and others who have assisted the Government in fighting the "enemy of the nation", he said although most addicts returned to their old habits after counselling and rehabilitative measures, the situation would have been worse if bodies like Pemadam had not played their role.

During the dinner tonight, Dr Mahathir received RM280,000 in contributions for Pemadam from corporate figures and companies.

Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali was honoured at the reception when she was accorded the "Ibu Srikandi Pemadam" for her part in fighting the drug menace.