

11/02/2003

`Some children with mental problems addicted to TV'

Ramlan Said

THREE out of 10 children with problems referred to the Hospital Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (HUKM) Psychiatric Department are addicted to television and video games, Berita Harian reported yesterday.

Among the problems included declining academic performance, lack of interest in attending school, refusal to obey teachers' instructions and lack of attention in class.

HUKM Associate Professor Zasmani Shafie was quoted by the newspaper as saying that out of 10 cases referred, two or three involved children addicted to playing video games, either at home or cyber cafes.

"Every available free time is used by them to play the games," he said.

Even when they were not playing, he said the children admitted that video games were always on their mind.

He said children lacking family attention and from broken families were more interested in spending time at cyber cafes rather than schools.

Utusan Malaysia reported that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali would hold a Hari Raya Aidiladha open house tomorrow.

The event will be held at Dewan Wawasan, Jitra, Kedah from 10.30am to 3pm.

Berita Harian on Sunday reported a plea from Persatuan Karyawan Malaysia for the public not to condemn all artistes just because a few among them were involved in drugs and negative activities.

Its honorary chairman Zainal Abidin Omar said all quarters, including Umno Youth and the Information Ministry, should instead help solve problems faced by artistes.

"We regret the statement by Umno Youth calling for firm action to be taken against errant artistes without proposing any solution to the problems. Anyway, Karyawan does not condone artistes or youths taking drugs."