

M'sia likely to reach ageing nation status by 2035

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Malaysia is likely to reach an ageing nation status by 2035 with the number of people above the age of 60 reaching 15 per cent of the population, an official said, citing a United Nations' figure.

Welfare Department Deputy Director-General (Operation) Halijah Yahaya said statistics showed that the percentage of ageing people in Malaysia was on the increase.

"In 2000, the number of elderly people was 1.45 million or 6.2 per cent of the total population but in 2009, the number increased to 2.03 million or 7.1 per cent of the total population," she said.

The United Nations categorises any country with 10 per cent of its population above the age of 60 as an ageing nation.

Speaking at the opening of a seminar on caring society here today, Halijah said the main factor contributing to the country's ageing population was the decline in fertility and increase in life expectancy, which currently stands at 71.4 years for men and 76.2 for women.

"The government should therefore view seriously the ageing rate among the population especially because old people have their own requirements," she said.

On the seminar, Halijah said it was aimed at inculcating noble values among the people and strengthening the bonds between the older and younger generations.

- Bernama

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