

**PM: Family well-being index can improve**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**3 November, 2012**  
**By ONG HAN SEAN**

PEKAN: The nation's family well-being index is currently at 7.55 on a scale of 10 and has room for improvement, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said Malaysia had yet to obtain an 'A' in family well-being, but that he would give the current index rating a 'B+'.

"As a developing country, we need to choose the best model for our growth. One is the conventional model which uses per capita income as a yardstick.

"However, I feel that if it is a one-dimensional model then it is not accurate and comprehensive because we can be wealthy, but that does not mean we are happy," said Najib at the launch of the 1Malaysia National Family Month here Saturday.

"This index is made up of multiple components such as crime rate and pollution. For example, if the people are stuck in traffic all day, then that will mean a drop in happiness," he said.

Najib said policies such as maternity leave for both parents, family education programmes and the My First Home scheme had been introduced as part of the Government's efforts to strengthen the family institution.

"As a continued commitment, I propose that National Family Month be celebrated every year while private sector employers are encouraged to organise family days," he said.

Najib added that private companies would be tax-exempted for holding such programmes.

"It is hoped we can get nearer to level 10 of the happiness index in the near future. We can prioritise our family in almost anything except giving contracts to our own family members," he advised.

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