

Dr M warns of overweight kids

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: Encourage them to take up activities like cycling, says ex-PM

FORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed his concern with obesity among schoolchildren.

Dr Mahathir fears overweight children will suffer from health problems in the future.

"It is worrying that children as young as 10 are overweight.

"We need to cultivate a love for outdoor and sport activities among our children to ensure they lead a healthy lifestyle," he said here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should emulate the Chinese and Japanese, who used bicycles as a mode of transportation.

"There are not many overweight people in these two countries. Most of them look healthy.

"They lead a balanced and healthy lifestyle by cycling to their workplace.

"Cycling also contributes to a cleaner environment."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Langkawi International Mountain Bike Challenge (LIMBC) patron, called for greater participation by companies in hosting outdoor and sports-related programmes to foster a healthy lifestyle.

Echoing the same call was Deputy Education Minister Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi, who said such programmes would help the government to come up with more activities under the "One Student One Sports" initiative.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and Puad witnessed 30 mountain bicycles presented to six secondary schools in Dataran Lang.

Present were Dr Mahathir's wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, and Langkawi Development Authority chairman Tan Sri Ramli Khalid.

Also present were state police chief Datuk Ahmad Ibrahim and LIMBC organiser and Human Voyage (M) Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Malik Mydin.

The bicycles were sponsored by Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD), under its corporate social responsibility programme, in conjunction with the six-day challenge, which ends on Saturday. YSD is a charity body under the Sime Darby Group, the main sponsor for LIMBC.

Under the YSD programme, each school will receive five bicycles in phases.

The schools are SMK Ayer Hangat, SMK Kedawang, SMK Kelibang, SMK Langkawi Pulau Tuba, SMK Mahsuri and SMK Tunku Putra.

During the ceremony, 15 petrol-operated bicycles were handed

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