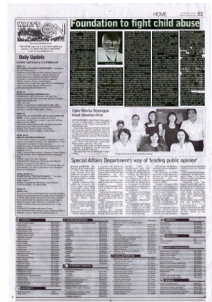


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Foundation to fight child abuse

TAWAU: The Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF) will help to fight and prevent child abuse in the country.

"We are prepared to play a role in any public awareness campaigns," said its vice chairman, Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye.

Lee, who was here for a visit yesterday, said parents should acquire parenting skills to better equip themselves to bring up their children and make every possible effort to spend quality time with their children instead of abusing them.

He cited that the parents should show their love and care for their offsprings.

Besides fending for their children in terms of ensuring they are appropriately brought up, parents must instill positive values in their children from young to ensure they become responsible citizens.

"To love children is to respect them. The children in turn will grow up and respect their parents as an appreciation to what has been done for them.

"As children are the future

of the nation, the leaders and pillar of society, it is also necessary for the adults to give them a chance to voice their feelings and their thoughts which should also be taken into account in family and national development," Lee pointed out.

He is concerned over the dumping of new-born babies, child abuse and missing children which have captured the attention of the media and the community at large.

This dumping of new-born babies is a very serious reflection of the state of

social ills in our society involving promiscuous youths and teenagers. It is also symptomatic of problematic families where the family institutions have failed to inculcate noble values among the young generation, Lee pointed out.

The influence of pornography through the Internet is also a factor that cannot be ignored and this has led to the emergence of many social ills. More serious is the issue of child abuse by either the parents or step-parents.

Since the beginning of this year a couple of deaths (four cases) occurred as a result of severe child abuse.

Lee said for those who are so cruel and heartless to abuse children leading to their deaths, the time has come for the introduction of mandatory death sentence on those who are proven guilty in the courts.

In the wake of all these disturbing reports of baby-dumping, child abuse and child neglect, the question that comes to mind is whether the government and society as a whole have taken effective action to

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address the issue and to give adequate protection to children as a whole.

According to him, the government has launched the "Say Yes for Children" campaign since 2001.

The campaign was part of the global movement for children to ensure greater action for children and to hold governments responsible for it.

The "Say Yes for Children" campaign aimed to create a conducive and enabling environment for children to grow up and was built on 10 imperative actions and responsibilities which are: leave no child out, put children first, care for every child, fight HIV/AIDS, stop harming and exploiting children, listen to children, educate every child, protect children from war, protect the earth for children, and fight poverty and invest in children.

"The campaign called for urgent steps by all strata of society, including governments, private sector and the community to ensure the well-being and security of future generations, by

safeguarding the environment at the global, national and local levels.

"It is not incorrect to say that the world belongs to our children and adults of this generation are its caretakers. As such, it is imperative that we must undertake whatever means at our disposal to build a better world for our children.

"To achieve this it has to begin from the home. Children are too young to protect themselves and they have to look up to their elders to take care of them. Here lies the very vital role of the parents," Lee advised.

He disclosed that the time has come for more aggressive and integrated efforts to be undertaken involving government agencies, NGOs, community-based organizations and the media to curb the number of child abuse cases.

In this regard more effective strategies need to be implemented to deal with child abuse while the causes of child abuse must be determined and ways initiated to address them.



Lee Lam Thye