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Bistro holds second charity fund-raiser for AIDS cause

Shuib Taib

ALEXIS Bistro and Bar will organise its second charity fund-raiser for the Malaysian AIDS Foundation, and this time it is in aid of the Foundation's Paediatric AIDS Fund.

According to its spokesperson Angela Leong, the charity event is to be held in conjunction with the official opening of its new outlet upstairs called Alexis Bar.

Titled An Evening of Jazz, it will be held on Wednesday. Jazz musician Farid Ali will be the opening act.

AIM's (Anugerah Industri Muzik) Best Female Vocalist Sheila Majid will render a few of her songs.

There will also be a special video presentation highlighting the plight of children who are afflicted with HIV and AIDS.

"We really want to do something for children this time around. We hope that by having this event, we can make caring Malaysians aware of the need to support children who are infected and affected by this disease," says Leong.

Pan Global Berhad is the main corporate donor for the event. A cheque for RM25,000 was presented by Alex Wong, executive director of Pan Global, to chairman of the Malaysian AIDS Foundation, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir.

The donation, he said, is to help ease the suffering of these children who are either HIV-positive or are at risk of being orphaned when their parents die of AIDS.

At the time of writing, Alexis has collected RM75,000 from corporate and private donors.

"We hope to raise more," said Leong.

The other donors include Kim Hin Berhad (RM15,000), Gula Perak Berhad (RM10,000) and Bolton Properties (RM5,000). The fund-raising affair will be strictly by invitation only. Those who wish to attend will have to produce their invitations which can be obtained at a minimum donation of RM150.

The Paediatric AIDS Fund was officially launched in 1996.

Said Marina: "We seek to raise funds in order to support families living with HIV who need it so that their children will not be deprived of a normal childhood.

"Very often, when their parents fall victim to the disease, children suffer just as much. Hence, supporting children who are affected and infected is a valid measure to prevent the risk of infection later on.

"Children without emotional and social support can become vulnerable to all factors that put them at risk of HIV infection."

The fund provides financial assistance for medical treatment of children infected with HIV, to families and/or caretakers of infected and affected children, to groups involved in fostering education, broadening public awareness and compassion, as well as for social grants for research towards prolonging and improving the quality of life of children infected and affected with HIV.

So what is the level of awareness like with regard to the disease here in Malaysia?

"We still have a long way to go. I think a lot of people still do not have a clue as to what AIDS is and how it can affect them. They think that if a person with HIV sits on a particular seat, then the same seat cannot

be used by anyone else.

"It goes to show how uninformed they are. We still have lots more ground to cover," said Marina.

For more information, call Alexis at 03-2842880 (Terence Tan).

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