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Businessman gives RM1m to build poor students' hostel

ARAU, Tues. - Businessman Datuk Ishak Ismail donated RM1 million today for the construction of a hostel complex for poor students initiated by Yayasan Pok dan Kassim.

The newly-established foundation - named after Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim's mother and late father - would focus on charitable works and activities related to public and social welfare.

A cheque was presented in conjunction with the project's ground-breaking ceremony officiated by National Unity and Social Development Minister, Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail.

The proposed complex with a capacity for 100 hostelites is located on a one-hectare site at Kampung Kubang Gajah near here.

It is expected to be ready next February.

Ishak, who is executive deputy chairman of Kentucky Fried Chicken, was not at the function.

His representative, Hayazi Ismail, handed over the donation to Shahidan's wife, Datin Seri Shamsiah Mohamad Yassin.

Shahidan was also absent as he was touring South America with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

In her speech, Zaleha commended the Menteri Besar for establishing the foundation in honour of his parents.

She also welcomed private sector contributions towards helping the less fortunate, particularly children.

She said it was appropriate for those who have become successful to complement the Government's efforts to eradicate poverty.

"There should not be any more cases of children dropping out of school because of a lack of money." She said the ministry assisted some 33,000 poor children last year by providing them with cash, clothes, books, spectacles and bicycles.

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