

15 JUL 1997

MLF-campaign

CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE MALAYSIANS ON LIVER DISEASE

KUALA LUMPUR, July 15 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Liver Foundation (MLF) is to embark on a campaign to educate the public on liver diseases especially hepatitis and liver cancer, said its president Datuk Dr Ismail Merican.

"Since hepatitis is asymptomatic, most people are not aware of contracting the disease until it was too late," he said at a news conference to announce the official launch of MLF at a charity dinner on Aug 13.

He said many Malaysians also did not know about the various types of hepatitis, the types of test to be done and treatments available.

MLF estimates 2.5 million of the population could be infected with hepatitis. Of these, 25 per cent are at a risk of serious infections and eventual death from cirrhosis and liver cancer.

Up to 90 per cent of liver cancers diagnosed in the region are associated with hepatitis B and C.

Dr Ismail also said liver cancers were among the top 10 diseases afflicting male population.

"And about 80 per cent of liver cancer patients came to us too late. By that time, it's hard to do anything," he said.

The foundation, a non-profit charitable organisation registered last year, would be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is the patron of MLF.

Dr Ismail said the Prime Minister would personally accept cheques for RM50,000 and above from donors at the dinner where the MLF hoped to collect RM2 million.

The cost of the tables are priced at RM3,000 to RM10,000 each and all donations to the foundation would tax exempted. Those interested could contact Cik Kristine and Cik Kong of MLF at 03-2543455/2543566 and fax 03-2530900. -- BERNAMA

HAK ABG