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Direct Bakti aid for disabled varsity students

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Bakti's welfare and scholarship fund will help provide financial aid to disabled students in local universities directly.

Bakti (The Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers) president Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said it would look into the applications of disabled students based on their individual needs.

"Some disabled students may need huge sums of money and others a lesser amount, depending on what educational tools they need to buy," she said.

She was speaking at a Press conference before presenting a RM50,000 cheque on behalf of Bakti's welfare and scholarship fund to Universiti Islam Antarabangsa at its campus in Gombak today.

Also present were Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife of Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Datin Tunku Maziah Tunku Mustapha, wife of Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abang Abu Bakar and Datin Amar Naimah Hasbi Sulaiman, wife of Agriculture Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud.

UIA rector Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Ahmad Abu Sulayman received the cheque on behalf of the university.

Dr Siti Hasmah said the money was aimed at helping poor students who are studying in their first year in the university.

"We are concerned about the poor students who have to go through a lot of hardship particularly in their first year.

"With the money they can pay their tutorial fees or buy necessities so that they can fully concentrate on their studies."

Dr Siti Hasmah said however, Bakti needed a report from the university on the recipients to ensure that the money was not misused.

This is the fourth time that Bakti is contributing towards the university since 1991.

The contributions are for a period of two years.

Other institutions that have received such contributions are Mara Institute of Technology and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Dr Siti Hasmah said Bakti would continue to provide financial aid to disabled and poor students despite the economic problems.

For poor students, she said the association would go through the universities which would select the most deserving students.

Last year, Bakti had contributed RM100,000 for natural disaster relief, RM1.27 million in scholarships and RM2 million for welfare purposes which encompass medical treatment, artificial limbs and wheelchair.

Dr Siti Hasmah later led Bakti members on a visit to the university's law and economic faculties and its resource centre.

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