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Rally to promote AIDS awareness

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Malaysian AIDS Council and its Japanese counterpart, Ribbon Project Japan, and the Motoring Association of Malaysia (PPM) will join hands to participate in the Silverstone Third Asian Rally to create AIDS awareness.

The rally will be flagged off at Dataran Merdeka tomorrow by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

It aims to promote AIDS awareness among people in rural areas.

The rally - with a convoy of more than 80 vehicles - will begin in Kuala Lumpur and end in Chiangmai, Thailand on Aug 15. Each vehicle will be adorned with stickers from the Ribbon Project.

The convoy, comprising more than 50 teams from six nations, will pass through towns, cities, Orang Asli villages and rural areas in both countries that are not easily accessible by conventional vehicles.

A representative from the Ribbon Project Japan, Norio Maruhashi, will also be competing in the rally. He will also undertake the task of distributing pamphlets and brochures to people along the route.

Malaysian AIDS Council chairman, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, said: "We are glad to be involved in this campaign as we are able to work with the Ribbon Project Japan and the Motoring Association of Malaysia in raising awareness on HIV/AIDS, especially among the communities in inaccessible locations."

She added that this was an excellent opportunity to educate and protect the rural people from HIV/AIDS.

Marina was speaking at the joint Third Silverstone Asian Rally-Ribbon Project-Malaysian AIDS Council Press conference at the Ming Court hotel today.

The Malaysian AIDS Council will assist the Ribbon Project all the way to the Malaysia-Thailand border, after which it will pass the responsibility to its Thai counterparts.

Said PPM vice-president M.J. Ganesan: "We are proud to be associated with the Malaysian AIDS Council and the Ribbon Project of Japan.

"We will provide all the necessary assistance to them throughout the journey to make the campaign a success."

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