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Artistes' support for AIDS cause

SO apt in title and spirit - Spirit of Life - an album of Malaysian songs was released on Friday in conjunction with the Fifth International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific to be hosted by the Malaysian Aids Council at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur from Oct 23 to 27.

Malaysian Aids Foundation (MAF) chairman Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir will launch the album at the Suria KLCC tomorrow at 7pm.

The album which consists of four songs and three instrumentals is in tribute to Malaysians living with HIV and Aids.

The title song, Spirit of Life, will be performed by popular local singer Ning Baizura.

Other songs in the album are I Will Be There by Sam of Innuendo, Pengorbanan by Liza and Azlina Aziz and Selamanya presented by Innuendo.

Rizal Kamaruzzaman and Azlan Abu Hassan are executive producers for the album.

Entrance to the official launch of the Spirit of Life album is free.

Also performing live are Innuendo, Sam, Liza and Azlina Aziz.

Asri Ghafar, chairman of the cultural and events sub-committee of the ICAAP local organising committee and trustee for the MAF said he was extremely happy the young artistes and songwriters had stepped forward to give their support to the AIDS cause.

"We hope more people will come forward and do the same," said Asri.

Asri was particularly thankful to HELP Institute for taking the initiative to organise the fund-raising project.

The CDs and cassettes are priced at RM25 and RM12 respectively.

Besides Suria KLCC, the CDs and cassettes are available at the music stores, the HELP Institute and MAF.

The organisers are hoping to sell at least 10,000 copies.

Forty per cent of the proceeds will be channelled to the MAF for programmes on HIV/AIDS education, prevention and care.

"I hope the Spirit of Life will be an eye opener to Malaysians that we should give our helping hands to those who are really in need without taking into account their race, religion or age," said Rizal.

The ICAAP is chartered to focus on the need to re-assess and evaluate what has been carried out in the past in order to formulate better prevention, treatment, care and support programmes for people living with HIV/AIDS in the region.

The five-day congress will also include a series of interesting and important plenary sessions, oral session, skills building workshop, exhibitions and satellite symposium related to people all walks of life.

Themed The Next Millennium - Taking Stock and Moving Forward, the ICAAP is organised by the MAC with the support of the Ministry of Health.

It is co-sponsored by the Aids Society of Asia and the Pacific (Asap), the joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Asia/Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organisations (ApcasO) and the Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (APN+).

More than 3,000 delegates are expected at the congress at the Putra World Trade Centre.

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