

03 MAR 2000

Hasmah-ISDAM

SITI HASMAH APPEALS FOR DONATIONS FOR TABUNG IHSAN

PUTRAJAYA, March 3 (Bernama) -- Low income earners requiring costly medical treatment such as kidney dialysis and hole-in-the-heart operations need to be continually helped to ease their sufferings.

The Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali said the poor did not have the financial means to pay for their treatment.

"The treatment cost was high for kidney ailment and hole-in-the-heart operation," she told a media conference at the promotional and publicity launch of Tabung Ihsan Sang Wira set up by the Islamic Specialist Doctors' Association of Malaysia (ISDAM) here today.

Heart surgeries cost about RM10,000 to RM80,000 while kidney patients needed between RM150 to RM250 for every dialysis treatment, said Dr Siti Hasmah, who is also ISDAM's patron.

She said ISDAM set up the fund to help finance the poor suffering from the two ailments as an average of eight people had kidney and heart problems from every 1,000 babies born.

Dr Siti Hasmah said about 40,000 to 60,000 Malaysians suffered from hole-in-the-heart every year while some 2,200 new kidney cases were detected requiring dialysis treatment.

"With the country's economic recovery, I believe more donors will come forward to contribute their bit towards this noble cause and to realise the ambition of creating a caring society," she added.

ISDAM comprising Muslim specialists was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in October last year.

Its president Dr M.A. Sidek Nontak said the fund-raising drive was to organise dinners in four states with the first to be in Kuala Lumpur in May.

Donors contributing a minimum of RM10,000 would have the opportunity to hand over their donations to Dr Mahathir.

He said ISDAM also planned to have a charity premiere and stage a concert featuring popular local artistes.

Sidek said ISDAM had not been able to help any patient thus far although four eligible cases had sought help from the association.

At the function, Dr Siti Hasmah launched the fund's logo in the shape of a heart and kidney with the picture of the television cartoon character "Sang Wira" as its mascot.

She also listen to the promotional theme song "Fajar Bahagia" sung by Ammar.

-- BERNAMA

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