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Ansara's telethon: RM957,000 so far

Azura Abas

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Malaysians have so far donated RM957,000 to the Mara Junior Science Colleges Former Students' Association (Ansara) under the National Telethon for Education 2004.

Its president Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir said donations were still pouring in to Tabung Harapan Ihsan Pelajar in cash and kind to help children from poor or broken families.

Due to intensive campaigns on the fundraising programme, he said, Ansara also received pledges from professionals who had volunteered to become tuition teachers for the underprivileged children.

"It does feel good to know Malaysia has many kindhearted people," he said, adding Ansara needed to meet its RM1.2 million target with the support from the public and corporate sectors.

On teachers' perception towards poor students, Mukhriz said teachers had changed their attitude after realising that such students too can excel, if given "a nudge in the right direction" and support.

"Some teachers told us that underprivileged students scoring Cs and Ds were considered good because they did not fail. It is disheartening to hear this.

"In this respect, we concentrated on the poor students by giving them the proper support and encouragement. Most of them have scored high grades in their tests," he said.

Free tuition is given to the poor at Ansara tuition centres in Sungai Buloh, Sungai Plong, Kampung Melayu Subang, Subang Perdana and Kampung Sungai Gajah, which are opened to underprivileged children of all ethnic backgrounds.

Proceeds from the telethon, with the tag line "We are the Youth of the Nation", will also go towards maintaining these tuition centres set up together with Angkatan Pemuda Warisan Malaysia or the Malaysian Youth Front.

The money would be used for paying students' school fees, monthly allowances, scholarships and loans, including emergency loans.

With seven days to go before the March 1 deadline, the public can still contribute via the short messaging system by typing "TABUNG HIP" and send it to 36600 at RM10 per SMS.

Ansara patron Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali was the first to make a donation to the fund via SMS. She donated RM10. The wife of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad also made a personal donation of RM10,000 to the fund.

Contributions can also be made by calling 600-86-1077, or sending money orders to P.O. Box 10761, 50724 Kuala Lumpur.

The public can also contribute online through [Maybank2u.com](http://Maybank2u.com) by forwarding the contribution to account number 514093410644 or online transfer to BCB Internet Banking to account number 1414-0035683-051. For further information visit [www.nationaltelethon4edu.com](http://www.nationaltelethon4edu.com)

Bulk of the donations came from Celcom (M) Bhd (RM250,000), Tenaga Nasional Bhd (RM150,000), Telekom Malaysia Bhd (RM125,000) and UEM Group (RM150,000).

Ansara had also organised a one-day carnival at Dataran Merdeka on Saturday to raise funds, where several activities like a fun-fair and performances by artistes like Annuar Zain, Camellia, Hattan and Nora were held.

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