

Disabled folks from PJ get free wheelchairs

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KELANA Jaya MP Loh Seng Kok believes that if disabled people are given a chance, they can excel in life and even become good role model for others, especially able-bodied people.

"There are eight young bowlers who are training under the Petaling District Tenpin Bowling Association (of which Loh is the president). They underwent an intensive three-month training and are already better players than me!

"I've also put in a motion at Parliament not to call them Orang Kurang Upaya (OKU), as this would make them feel discouraged or

depressed, but to call them Orang Kuat Upaya instead," he said during a presentation ceremony of 17 units of wheelchairs by the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Petaling Jaya at Dewan Rukun Tetangga SS5C/9.

Also present were MBPJ councillors Abu Hasan Asha'ari Alang Jaman, Rusna Aman who represented Seri Setia assemblyman Datin Paduka Seripah Noli Syed Hussin, and SS5C RT chairman Sanggat Singh.

"The Crocodile Foundation Wheelchair Charity, the charitable arm of the Crocodile Group of Companies, sponsored 600 units of wheelchairs to the needy in Malaysia through JCI Malaysia (JCIM), and today we're presenting them on behalf of JCIM," said JCI Petaling Jaya president Lim

Chiat Yien.

"Out of the 600 units, JCIM allocated 120 units to the Klang Valley, 17 of which will benefit the needy folks in Petaling Jaya.

"The objective of the JCIM National Corporate Social Responsibility Programme 2007 is to create awareness of the needs and abilities of people who are physically challenged."

JCI Petaling Jaya is a non-profit youth organisation affiliated to JCI Malaysia - a worldwide federation of young leaders and entrepreneurs that emphasise on four areas of opportunity - leadership, entrepreneurship, fellowship and social responsibility.

"The wheelchairs were allocated to those who have OKU cards and are

registered with my service centre," said Loh.

"I'm planning to work with local governments like MBPJ (Petaling Jaya City Council) to improve amenities and infrastructures for the disabled, which would allow them to be more independent.

"This will also help create a better living environment for other groups of society like senior citizens, pregnant ladies, young mothers with babies in strollers and little children."

He suggested that local governments should give priority to housing or commercial projects that have disabled-friendly facilities, including ramps, staircases, toilets signage, lifts, parking spaces, pedestrian bridges, bus stops and even open spaces for

easier access.

Loh also presented some cash from his MP allocation to three organisations - RM3,000 to Beautiful Gate Foundation, RM3,000 to St. John Ambulance Malaysia, and RM2,000 for Chempaka Buddhist Lodge.

Beautiful Gate Foundation executive director Pastor Sia Siew Chin wholeheartedly supported Loh's suggestion of improving amenities for the disabled.

"Whenever there's a place with facilities for the disabled, it's safe for all people to use, even for able-bodied people who may have a temporary disability. We just need to think of the bigger picture," she said.