



FOR THE SOCIETY: Najib (centre), flanked by Shamsul on his right and Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Dr George Chan, pose for photo with the aid recipients during the launching of the programme.

'Petronas Touch of Hope' programme for the poor

By Salena Pail

MIRI: Petronas launched its 'Program Sentuhan Harapan Petronas (Petronas Touch of Hope)', a community outreach programme to provide basic assistance to hardcore poor families here, yesterday.

It was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at Desa Senadin Petronas station.

In his speech, Petronas president and chief executive officer Datuk Shamsul Azhar Abbas said the national oil corporation was taking the lead in contributing to the development of society through such programme.

"The programme is also in line with the country's vision as laid out by the prime minister recently in the New Economic Model and 10th

Malaysia Plan," he added.

Under the outreach programme, a total of 5,000 families nationwide are selected for assistance, according to criteria such as having monthly income of below RM440 and having school-going children.

Priority is given to families residing close to Petronas stations.

In Sarawak, 1,800 families have been chosen, including 600 in Miri. Fifty of the families attended yesterday's launching.

The families will receive RM80 monthly in the form of basic food such as rice, sugar and cooking oil delivered through Petronas' 28 Mesra shops nationwide.

At the early stage, a total of 500 families will enjoy the assistance starting this month while

the rest will receive their assistance in stages.

"The community outreach programme is aimed not just to give assistance to the hardcore poor group, but to motivate them in improving their living," said Shamsul.

Apart from the food aid, the programme also provides supplementary courses in basic financial literacy and skills.

These are aimed to help the recipients gain knowledge in areas pertaining to managing family finances, ways to increase joint family income, promote learning culture among the children and youths as well as encourage them to break away from cycle of poverty.

The outreach programme was implemented by Petronas in collaboration with Yayasan MyKasih

and several local non-governmental organisations.

Shamsul said as a responsible corporate body, Petronas had always tried to balance its business mission with social commitment.

"Petronas has been implementing various community outreach programmes, especially through education and human capital development, taking holistic and integrated approaches," he pointed out.

In education, it has set up scholarship and sponsorship programmes which had produced professionals in various fields.

The establishment of University Technology Petronas (UTP) focused on producing more professionals specialising in the oil and gas industry.