

Hot breakfast for KL's homeless

Two organisations join hands to start soup kitchen



AS BREAKFAST is the most important meal of the day, one group has stepped up to help the homeless by running their soup kitchens first thing in the morning.

Institut Onn Ja'afar (IOJ) launched its first morning soup kitchen "Jom Bekpes!" as early as 7am to serve underprivileged students and homeless people in Chow Kit.

The morning soup kitchen idea, conceived by IOJ patron Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, is a collaboration between IOJ and Yayasan Chow Kit (YCK).

While the main target of the soup kitchen are the youths of

poor or homeless families who are taking classes at YCK's Kuala Lumpur Krash Pad centre in Chow Kit, it is also for those living on the streets in the area.

IOJ chief executive officer Charles Mohan said the group felt it would count more to give a meal to the less fortunate in the morning so they can have a better start to the day.

"We also did some research and came across studies that found that children who had breakfast before going to school performed better," he said.

"We want to give them something nutritious so they can have more energy to start their day."

This first session saw about 40 volunteers, comprising university students, IOJ and YCK staff as well as the public.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia students Yang Adlina Zulkifly, 21, and Siti Nur Fatimah Shaifol Akmar, 20, who were volunteering for a soup kitchen programme for the first time, said it was an inter-

esting experience.

"I have volunteered to work with the elderly before but this is the first time I got to work with children and we learned a lot about the soup kitchens in Kuala Lumpur by talking to some of the homeless people here," said Yang Adlina.

"This is my first time doing this kind of volunteer work and it makes me feel good and satisfied," said Siti Nur Fatimah.

"We spoke to some of the homeless people and they were quite friendly," she added.

IOJ and YCK will be holding "Jom Bekpes!" soup kitchens once every two weeks, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 7am outside KL Krash Pad at 346, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

Mohan said depending on public response and support from food sponsors, they may increase the frequency of "Jom Bekpes!" to weekly or several times a week.