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Japan to go on offering assistance

REACHING OUT: The Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects Scheme is aimed at empowering community-based organisations

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THE Japanese government has extended its grant assistance totalling RM266,428 to Alumni Look East Policy Society (Aleps), Malaysian CARE, Negri Sembilan Family Planning Association and PT Foundation.

Ambassador Shigeru Nakamura said the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects Scheme (GGP) was aimed at empowering community-based organisations working at the grassroots level.

“Despite the difficult situation in Japan after the earthquake and tsunami, last year, the government is determined to continue helping those in need to create a better future for all,” he said at a ceremony at the embassy.

Aleps president Syed Putera Syed Mokhtar said the grant would be used for about 100 refurbished wheelchairs from Japan.

“We will liaise with community-based rehabilitation organisations

to forward the custom-made wheelchairs for children here,” he said.

Malaysian CARE will buy a one-tonne truck to be used as a mobile library. Its executive director, Wong Young Soon, said education was the only way to improve the life of poor communities.

Negri Sembilan Family Planning Association president Chow Heap Yeong said the grant would enable the organisation to buy an electrocardiograph and an ultrasound system.

“We could provide free reproductive healthcare to people in the state,” said Chow.

He said the majority of the patients were from places without road access.

PT Foundation acting director Raymond Tai said the organisation had applied for the grant because it wanted to improve the facilities of an HIV/AIDS centre at Chow Kit.

He said the foundation needed a well-equipped resource centre to educate mostly drug addicts, sex workers and transgender people about HIV prevention.

“We also need the centre to train volunteers,” Tai said.

He added that the foundation distributed sterile needles and condoms.

Since 1989, GGP has granted RM13.7 million to 124 projects in Malaysia.

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Ambassador Shigeru Nakamura (centre) says the **Japanese government is determined to continue to help those in need despite the island nation's difficult situation after the earthquake and tsunami** last year. With him are (from left) Raymond Tai, PT Foundation chairman Hisham Hussein, Dr Chow Heap Yeong, former Malaysian ambassador to Japan Tan Sri Muhammed Khatib Abdul Hamid, Syed Putera Syed Mokhtar and Wong Young Soon. Pic by Nashairi Mohd Nawi