

KENYATAAN MEDIA

BUILDING A GLOBAL PARKINSON'S MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE

Malaysian Parkinson's Disease Association (MPDA), a national support group for people with Parkinson's, their caregivers and families formed in 1994, is hosting the World Parkinson's Day Event at the Petaling Jaya Civic Centre on Sunday, April 1, 2012 from 10 am to 2 pm. The event is jointly held with and fully sponsored by the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ). About 200 people are expected to attend the event.

World Parkinson's Day is held every year on April 11, to commemorate the birthday of James Parkinson who first identified Parkinson's in 1817. It is also called the Red Tulip Awareness Day because of the red tulip that is used as the worldwide symbol for Parkinson's. The objective of the day is to create the awareness of the condition and to spur research and new treatments in Parkinson's.

It is estimated that up to 10 million people around the world are affected by Parkinson's which is a chronic, progressive and degenerative neurological disease. In Malaysia, there are about 60,000 people who are living with Parkinson's. As the population ages and life expectancy continues to increase, the risk of developing Parkinson's is expected to be higher in the future. Currently, there's no cure for the disease, and its cause is unknown.

The highlight of the event is the showcasing and signing of the Global Parkinson's Pledge in Malaysia by YB Tuan Dr. Xavier Jayakumar, Selangor State Exco Member and Permanent Chairman of Health, Plantation Workers, Poverty and Caring Government. The pledge was launched at the 2nd World Parkinson Congress held in Glasgow, Scotland in Oct, 2010 to build a global Parkinson's movement for change to make Parkinson's Disease a priority health, social and economic issue around the world and to advance a cure. Parkinson's is a debilitating, socially disruptive and costly condition in the world today, and as such, the World Parkinson congress has called for a worldwide appeal for one million people to unite and sign up the pledge by the 3rd WPC which will be held in Montreal, Canada in October, 2013.

Malaysian Parkinson's Disease Association is one of the organizing partners of the World Parkinson Congress and its President, Sara Lew sits on the Government Relation Committee of the World Parkinson Coalition. About 1500 Malaysians have already signed the pledge and all Malaysians are encouraged to sign the Global Parkinson's Pledge by clicking on www.parkinsonspledge.org to support the global effort to fight Parkinson's .

Other activities of the day include performances by members with Parkinson's, and a special session called "Painting with Parkinson's" which uses art as a therapy for people with Parkinson's conducted by U.C. Loh & her team of artists from Artemis Art. The art pieces drawn by the people with Parkinson's will be auctioned off to raise funds for the association. The event is also supported by Boehringer Ingelheim (M) Sdn. Bhd, Novartis Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd., Abbot Laboratories, Artemis Art and Candor Music.

For more information, please call Malaysian Parkinson's Disease Association at 03-79806685 or visit www.mpda.org.my.

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