

The Star Newspaper

23rd June 2012

Newly renovated dorms for St Nicholas kids

SQUEALS of excitement could be heard from 14 children of St Nicholas Home in Penang when they were shown to their newly renovated dormitories.

The children, who are deaf-blind and multi-handicapped (DBMH), giggled and laughed while playing with toys in their new rooms, which had been given a fresh coat of paint and equipped with better lighting and a new washroom.

Among them was Siti Rohaya Abdullah, 11, who sang and laughed when she was brought into her dormitory.

“She is very happy with this newly renovated place. It is quite obvious from her face, her singing and playing,” said dormitory house mother P. Loganayagi.

St Nicholas Home executive director Daniel Soon said the renovation of the dormitories cost RM35,496.58 which was raised from the Chefs Cook for Charity Day and World Children’s Day Charity Food Fair held in October last year at Golden Sands Resort.

The programme was initiated by its organising chairman Dr Sim Joo Seng, who is also a consultant paediatrician and paediatric cardiologist at Sim Children & Child Heart Clinic and supported by state Youth, Sports and Women, Family and Community Development Committee chairman Lydia Ong.

Soon said: “The renovation was aimed at coming up with two separate dormitories — one for the girls on the ground floor and one for the boys on the first floor — as these children are growing up and we feel that it is becoming inconvenient as there is no privacy for them.”

He added that the renovation of the dormitories had commenced about four weeks ago.

“There was a lot of construction done where the old partitions were taken down to expand the rooms.

“We also had wiring done for the lights and the washroom was also heavily renovated,” he said.

In about two weeks, the work would be fully completed, he added.

“There are 20 beds in total and so far, we have 14 DBMH children aged between nine and 18, who are sleeping in the dormitories.

“They will also have more space to help improve their daily living skills such as reading and writing,” Soon said.

The opening ceremony of the DBMH dormitories was officiated by Ong on Thursday.

She said the project, a partnership between the Penang Municipal Council, Chefs Association of Malaysia (Penang Chapter) and Dr Sim, had been carried out under her portfolio since 2008.

“This project is aimed at helping needy children from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as they are always in need of funds.

“I understand that each NGO is in need of at least RM200,000 yearly for its everyday expenses,” she said.

She also encouraged the public to be proactive in helping NGOs in need.