

'Functional Adaptive Clothing' for the disabled community



Raja Permaisuri Agong Tunku Hajah Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah delivers her speech virtually at the launch of Socso Functional Adaptive Clothing in Kuala Lumpur. - BERNAMA pic

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians have been urged to care more about the needs of the disabled (OKU) community in the country.

The royal call came from Raja Permaisuri Agong Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah who said the move to improve the needs of the disabled community would enable them to be part of the mainstream of society.

She said initiatives such as the Human Resource Ministry and Social Security Organisation's (Socso) Functional Adaptive Clothing campaign, which aims to assist the community with functional clothing that is easy to wear, was a good start.

"All quarters should also continue to create and innovate to improve the lives of the OKU community and also to make them feel part of the society.

"I was told the OKU community face challenges in finding the right type of clothing.

"This shows that the ministry via Socso has taken the initiative by becoming a pioneer in creating a 'functional adaptive clothing' starting with a traditional attire collection (for the disabled)," she said when launching the initiative virtually here today.

Tunku Azizah applauded the Baju Kurung and Baju Melayu designed by local fashion designer Nurita Harith who is famous for her traditional clothes collections through the Socso Tun Abdul Razak rehabilitation centre.

"I was also allowed to try the clothes and found the adaptive clothing collection is not only easy to wear but very comfortable apart from the cheerful and interesting colours used especially for the upcoming Hari Raya celebrations," she said.

The event which took place at the InterContinental Hotel also saw the attendance of Human Resource Minister Datuk Seri M. Saravanan and Socso chief executive Datuk Seri Dr Mohammed Azman Aziz Mohammed.

Saravanan said the Socso Functional Adaptive Clothing was designed specifically with flexibility features to ease the difficulties faced by the disabled group especially those who are paralysed with limited movement to wear clothes comfortably.

He said the idea to create a functional adaptive clothing collection was sparked when complaints came from individuals insured under Socso. They were receiving treatment at the Socso Tun Abdul Razak rehabilitation centre and faced difficulties in changing or wearing clothes.

"Those with paralysis and physical limitations need appropriate clothing. But it is hard to find in the market, let alone traditional clothing for the diverse races and cultures in the country.

"We hope the launch of the adaptive clothing collection by Socso can fulfil the needs of the OKU group and meet the requirement for clothes that are easy to wear, comfortable and stylish," he said.

Saravanan said 250 clothing items will be donated to disabled groups via selected non-governmental organisations.

He said there are 11 types of adaptive clothing such as Baju Melayu (three versions) followed by Kurta (one) and Baju Kurung Modern (seven) with specific features.

"Since Ramadan and Hari Raya are coming soon, the Socso Functional Adaptive Clothing collection presents a line of clothing that is fit to wear during the festivities and formal wear for the adults who are under the OKU group.

"The designs have been patented and hopefully the collection can be diversified for all including children in the future," he said.

Nurita meanwhile said it was a learning curve for her to understand and learn how to make clothes that are comfortable but also stylish for the disabled.

"I took it as a learning experience, learning that there are limits for the OKU group when changing clothes and there were not many traditional clothes available for them in the market.

"So there was a lot of research done on how certain things must be used to make it easier and functional for them to wear the clothes seamlessly.

"But I also managed to incorporate my touch in the collection such as the drapings I often use for my collection in the Baju Kurung Modern so the ladies can wear it for Hari Raya or any formal events," she said.