

More than 15,000 still waiting for kidneys

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KUALA LUMPUR: Almost every one of the over 15,000 Malaysians awaiting organ donor transplants suffers from kidney failure.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin revealed that of the 15,078 patients seeking an organ transplant in the country, 15,055 are for kidneys.

"The others awaiting organ donors include liver failure patients and heart and lung patients," he said when launching the World Kidney Day celebrations at Dataran Merdeka yesterday.

Muhyiddin noted that the number of Malaysians requiring dialysis treatment owing to kidney failure had increased from 7,837 in 2001 to 22,932 in 2010.

To help the less fortunate cope, he said the Government had allocated RM171.1mil to non-governmental organisations between 2001 to 2010



Arr! Run for your life: Kidneys for Life run participant Samil Lim, 50, keeping the heat of the sun off his head with a pirate hat as he runs alongside other participants at Dataran Merdeka. — AZMAN GHANI / The Star

to provide subsidised dialysis treatment for 23,390 individuals.

He added that RM20.1mil in capital grants were also provided to NGOs to buy dialysis machines over the last decade.

At a press conference later, Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai

said that although 188,147 people had registered as organ donors, the number was still low compared to other countries.

"The number represents a donor ratio of 0.6 per million population compared to Spain where it is 35 per million population and five per mil-

lion population in Singapore," he said.

However, Liow noted that greater awareness programmes had helped increase the number of people coming forward to pledge their organs from 7,500 in 2005 to 28,000 last year.