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Students to benefit from newly built hostel

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KOTA KINABALU: Aids to build hostels in the rural areas of Sabah are surprisingly abundant these couple of years.

With several other hostels up and under construction in interiors such as Pitas, Ranau, and Matunggong in Kota Marudu, another company has also followed in the footsteps of providing shelter for students.

The latest in line of this community programme is the construction of a rural hostel for over 60 students living several hours away from the SK Marak Parak, about 25km

from Sabah's east coast Kota Marudu district.

The hostel will be built near an SIB church there, so more students of the school have a place to stay during school session instead of walking couple of hours everyday just to go to school.

Kota Marudu member of parliament Datuk Dr. Maximus Ongkili commended Cepat Wawasan Group Sdn Bhd for their corporate social responsibility in assisting rural students in this respect.

"It is not in the Education Ministry's practice to provide hostels for primary schools," he said.

Hence, private sectors, non-governmental organisations (NGO) as well as religious bodies play a significant role in helping to build and manage rural hostels in areas including Kota Marudu, he said.

Dr Ongkili added that this facility is important for rural areas, as the pupils often have to walk for several hours to get to school due to distance and lack of good roads.

This results in low attendance rate in the schools located in the interior areas.

"Similarly, it is commendable of the church to make an effort to build the hostel to enable 60 more pupils to live nearby the school.

The church also funds the meals for the pupils who will live in the hostel it manages.

"This facility will certainly improve the pupils' learning and education performance," he said, adding that the new fully furnished hostel costs Sandakan-based Cepat Wawasan Group RM135,000.

About 75% of the pupils live far away and the school's existing hostel houses about 150 of its total 407 pupils who

came from as far as Beluran.

Meanwhile, Dr. Ongkili said a new sealed road is in the process of being built there, which is the Kota Marudu-MarakParak-Melinsau-Poring-Ranau link, which once completed will greatly improve lives for the people there.