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Honda Dreams Fund Reopen for Applications

Honda & UNDP Renews 4th year Partnership and Commitment in Making Dreams a Reality for Malaysian Youths

Kuala Lumpur, 7 January – Honda Malaysia Sdn Bhd in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Malaysia today announced the renewal of their pledge for the fourth year towards providing underprivileged youths in Malaysia a chance to pursue their dreams through education. The Honda Dreams Fund scholarship is now open for applications again to select 20 scholars for Honda Dreams Fund for the year 2010 beginning **7th January 2010**. Closing date for applications is **31st March 2010**.

The **Honda Dreams Fund (HDF)** was first launched in April 2007 and is aimed at providing full and non-binding scholarships for underprivileged but determined students who do not have the means or the funds to achieve their dreams and aspirations. To-date, a total of 60 scholars are already enrolled in the courses of their choice and taking the first step towards achieving their dreams.

“HDF is among the projects that we at Honda are extremely passionate about. Worldwide, Honda’s vision is to become a company which society wants it to exist. And with that vision in mind, we launched Honda Dreams Fund as part of our commitment to give back to Malaysians. Despite the recession and challenges facing the business environment this past year, we are committed to the this project to help the talented and less fortunate youths realize their dreams and achieve a better future through education. **Through Honda Dreams Fund, we hope to impart and empower these young people with Honda’s Power of Dreams and the Challenging Spirit, to provide them with the means towards a better tomorrow for themselves and their families.** At the same time, we also hope to contribute to the human capital development in Malaysia”, said Mr Toru Takahashi, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Honda Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

Following the renewal of the partnership, Honda announced that it would once again disburse RM 1 million in 2010 for Honda Dreams Fund. The company also said that it would continue to focus on reaching out to underprivileged youths all over Malaysia, especially those in the rural areas – to inform them and to give them an opportunity to apply for the scholarship.

In 2008 and 2009, the HDF reached out to communities in rural areas and visited schools around Klang Valley, Sabah, Sarawak, Pahang, Perak and Kedah to tell them about this opportunity. For 2010, HDF will continue its effort to visit more communities in other rural areas in Kelantan, Terengganu, Sabah, Perak and Klang Valley, organising roadshows and holding talks about HDF.

“The Honda Dreams Fund has brought hope into the lives of our 60 scholars, and they have become an example and an inspiration to people around them, especially the youths in their villages and hometowns. We are proud to note that three scholars from our first batch have already graduated. And on this note, we look forward to meeting the next batch of 20 scholars for 2010 as they take the exciting journey towards fulfilling their dreams. We certainly hope that this year, more dream-driven youths will apply and grab hold of this chance as it is indeed a once in a lifetime opportunity”, added Takahashi.

Since its inception, UNDP has been involved in the project to manage and oversee the awards of the scholarships, ensuring unbiased award and disbursements of fund. In evaluating and selecting the candidates, Honda Malaysia and UNDP work with an independent advisory panel comprising members from various organizations and NGOs, namely Human Rights Commission (SUHAKAM), All Women’s Action Society (AWAM) and Malaysian Youth Council (MYC).

“UNDP Malaysia remains committed to supporting efforts to assist marginalized and disadvantaged communities, consistent with Millennium Development Goal No. 1 on poverty eradication and eliminating hunger. Such efforts are also consistent with one of UNDP Malaysia’s five priority areas of focus, addressing poverty, inequality and exclusion,” said Kamal Malhotra, UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam and UN Resident Coordinator for Malaysia.

Malhotra added that through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives such as the HDF under Honda Malaysia, the Malaysian private sector could be a positive agent for change, helping to create new opportunities and inclusive markets. “UNDP strongly believes in supporting efforts to help uplift the poorest of the poor in society, namely the indigenous

communities, particularly in rural Sabah and Sarawak. Education and skills training could be the first biggest step for youths in poverty-affected areas towards a better future,” he said.

Honda’s commitment to the society where it is in covers many areas of philanthropic activities. In its commitment towards corporate social responsibility efforts, Honda Malaysia is also sponsoring the “Save Our Sumatran Rhino” project since 2006, an environmental conservation effort focusing on a rhino species found mainly in Malaysia.

Through both the “Rhino Rescue Project” and the “Honda Dreams Fund”, Honda Malaysia is committed to give back to Malaysia and Malaysians and become a company that society wants to exist.

For more information on the Honda Dreams Fund and details of the roadshow, please visit the website at www.honda.com.my/hdf .

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Criteria for Honda Dreams Fund

- It is open to Malaysians aged between 17 – 24 years who have at least completed and passed the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) examination (especially for candidates wishing to pursue formal tertiary education in local universities/institutes of higher learning)
- Combined Household Income of less than RM1,500 per month
- Candidates must not be receiving any bursaries or financial aid from other organizations, agencies or government.
- To apply, candidates are required to write an essay on their aspirations in realizing their dreams in not more than 500 words.
- Application forms can be downloaded from the HDF website (www.honda.com.my/hdf) and will also be appearing in major newspapers beginning 7th January 2010.
- The HDF is open for submissions from **7th January 2010 to 31st March 2010**.
- Throughout this period, the HDF crew will also be going on roadshows to different parts of Malaysia where on the spot video applications will be conducted.

About Honda Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.

Incorporated on 15 November 2000, Honda Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. is a partnership between Honda Motor Co., Ltd. of Japan, which owns 51% of the company, and two Malaysian companies, DRB-HICOM Berhad and Oriental Holdings Berhad, which hold 34% and 15% respectively. Since its inception, Honda Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. has been committed to achieving the “Highest Customer Satisfaction in Malaysia” in its business practices.

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About United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. Its current priority is to help all countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

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