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Pledge for more results in women's issues by NGO leaders

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Women's groups have pledged to bring in more results in issues concerning the fairer sex in the new millenium.

This message was delivered by women leaders and leading NGOs at a gathering with Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Shahrizat Jalil today.

Shahrizat, who is now in charge of the Women's Affairs Department (Hawa) at the ministry, announced an 'Open Door Policy' between the department and women NGOs, which she hoped would lead to greater co-operation between them.

"As evident at this gathering, the department is being given full support by representatives from all areas of women's issues - political, social, legal and commerce," she said, at a buka puasa gathering at Quality Inn City Centre.

"We will see more results, especially with the implementation of the Women's Development Action Plan," she added.

Shahrizat also announced that Hawa, along with an entourage comprising representatives of women NGOs, would be visiting the heads of State governments in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the nation's women's agenda.

Sharizat, who is also MP for Lembah Pantai, said the transfer of the department from the National Unity & Social Development Ministry to the Prime Minister's Department was a further sign of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's keen attention towards women issues.

She further said that with her in charge of the National Population and Family Development Board, there would be a concerted effort by the board and Hawa to ensure quality development and the well-being of the family formed the basic building blocks of society.

Sharizat said in the new millennium, the challenge facing women agencies and organisations was different from the past.

She said, "There are now emerging issues - such as globalisation, liberalisation and technological impact - and Hawa must be able to anticipate what the future holds for women."

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