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ASEAN LADIES IN WASHINGTON TO LEND A HELPING HAND

By: Salmy Hashim

WASHINGTON, Jan 10 (Bernama) -- An Asean Women's Circle (AWC) will soon be registered in Washington as an association to benefit the people of Asean, its vice-president Datin Faridah Ghazzali said Tuesday.

Speaking at a luncheon here, Faridah, wife of the Malaysian Ambassador to the United States Datuk Ghazzali Sheikh Kadir, said the Washington chapter of the AWC would, among other things, raise funds to help the less fortunate women in the rural areas of Asean.

The fund would aid women and their families in Asean member countries struck by natural disaster such as earthquakes and floods as well as assist the women in small businesses.

The AWC is the brainchild of Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. There are several AWC's run mainly by wives of diplomats representing the 10 Asean-member countries.

The luncheon held at the Brunei Embassy here was the AWC's first fund-raising effort to be followed by a big Asean bazaar featuring food and handicrafts later this year.

Faridah said the AWC in Malaysia, among others, had raised funds to donate mammography machines, that detect breast cancer, to women in rural areas.

-- BERNAMA

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