

17 JAN 2001

Sharizat-Minister

NEW MINISTER TO CONTINUE STRUGGLE ON ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 17 (Bernama) -- Newly appointed Minister of Women's Affairs Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil said today she had no plans to bring any changes but would continue to focus on the mainstream issues affecting the women of today.

She said among the main issues she would be looking into were the role of women as an individual, mother, wife, and daughter at home, and also as a worker in the office or factory.

"I don't see the women issue as an issue for women only...this issue also involves the society. I'm also interested to know why highly educated women today are not keen to work," she said during a press conference at her Lembah Pantai Community Service Centre.

Shahrizat said that in the era of the Internet Communication Technology (ICT) which had also brought about the concept of "Soho" (small office home office), educated women of today could still work without neglecting their traditional role.

She said that she wanted to work with every women organisation to look into the laws and government policies affecting women and would not hesitate to make necessary changes in order to improve the situation for women.

"I call upon all women leaders, no matter whether they are in the government or non-governmental organisations, to work with me as a team to raise issues affecting women," she said.

Shahrizat thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for appointing her, adding that her appointment also meant the Prime Minister had kept his promise to the women folk.

"The establishment of the new ministry shows that the government is always sensitive to the problems of the people. It is also a recognition to the women's struggles in Malaysia which started 50 years ago," she said.

Asked to clarify on her new posting, Shahrizat said: "I only heard about it today from the news on the radio and television... and I still do not know whether this will be a new ministry or another ministry in the Prime Minister's Department."

Meanwhile in SEPANG, newly appointed Housing and Local Government Deputy Minister Datuk M. Kayveas described his appointment today as a major success for the People's Progressive Party (PPP).

"This is the first time after 11 years that a member of the PPP has been appointed as a deputy minister," he told reporters at the Bilik Bunga Raya, KL International Airport after sending off Dr Mahathir to Japan for a four-day working visit.

He also thanked the prime minister on his appointment and pledged to work harder.

-- BERNAMA

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