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Forum-Women

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION NEEDED TO INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 7 (Bernama) - A social activist said Malaysia and other Asian countries should introduce affirmative action policy to ensure greater participations of women in all aspects of life.

Malaysian AIDS Council president Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir said such positive discrimination policy, like reserving a minimum of 30 percent participation of women in every aspect of life, would not only be good for women but would benefit everybody.

"Apparently there are theories which prove that if you have a certain number of women in any organisation, it effects a positive change for the organisation as a whole," she told reporters after participating in the East Asia Economic Summit of the World Economic Forum here.

She was involved in a discussion on "Women Leaders in Today's Asia". The forum on the topic focused on the low participation of women at top level positions in business as well as other fields of life.

Marina said the Malaysian government particularly the ministry concerned should advocate this sort of change to give better opportunity for women to play their role in nation building.

"If a conservative country like Pakistan can start doing that, we can certainly do that too in Malaysia," she said.

Pakistan she said had a policy of reserving 30 per cent participation for women in local government elections.

Marina said Malaysian women's participation in business and politics particularly was far from being satisfactory and it was time now that women in the country be considered a positive force.

Marina also stressed the need to tackle the cultural and religious barriers issue which hindered women from participating actively in jobs outside their homes.

-- BERNAMA

AFY AHH AAM