

Empower young women to lead, says PM

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Bernama

Muhyiddin Yassin has encouraged leaders in all organisations - be it in the government or NGOs, political parties and the corporate sector - to identify, uplift and empower young women leaders.

The prime minister said young women leaders should be given space as they need to flourish and unleash their full potential.

“I believe our young women leaders of today will be great leaders of tomorrow.

"We must stop doubting their potential because it is already proven that women too can make better leaders," he said in his keynote address at the virtual Rise 2021: Future Female Leaders Forum with the theme “Women, The Key To A Brighter Future” today.

He said empowering women goes beyond just giving encouraging words but it is

also about acknowledging that there are cultural and systemic challenges that women face in their everyday life solely due to their gender.

“Empowering women means we must not be a bystander to this fact but be the ones who actively provide continuous support for women to overcome those challenges and create change for a just and equitable world,” he added.

Muhyiddin said empowering women means protecting their rights to education, freedom of speech and equal opportunities that they rightfully deserve.

Women should be provided with the opportunities and necessary support for them to succeed in all their endeavours.

“Let them pursue their wildest dreams and prove their ability to succeed in this very challenging and competitive world. I believe successful women will contribute immensely to the betterment of our country, our community and our families,” he added.

Muhyiddin stressed that women were the pillars of the nation and all parties must create and sustain the right environment for women and all to thrive.

He said the support should start with young girls especially in education, as

according to a new Brookings report, increasing the number of women completing secondary education by just one percent could increase a country's economic growth by 0.3 percent.

He said research by the Brookings Institution has also found that every additional year of school increases a girl's eventual wages by an average of 12 percent.

"We must therefore continue to provide the necessary support for women to succeed and thrive in their lives – be it in education, business and profession. They must be given equal opportunities to compete and to excel in their respective fields."

Muhyiddin added Malaysia recognises that empowered women, especially financially empowered women, are key to building nations and economies.

As such, he said the government continues to provide support for women entrepreneurs through various initiatives including the RM95 million special micro-credit financing through Tekun, Mara and Agrobank, in addition to the RM50 million allocated to the Islamic Economic Development Foundation (Yapeim) to support Islamic pawnbroking through Ar-Rahnu BizNita.

Women have contributed immensely to the economic and social well-being of societies even during this Covid-19 pandemic, he said.

"As our economies are gradually recovering from the impact of the pandemic, women too assume a very important role in providing emotional and financial support to the affected families."

- Bernama

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