

90-day maternity leave to be proposed to cabinet
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The Women, Family and Community Development Ministry will soon table to the cabinet a maternity leave package and other attractive perks for a more family-friendly working environment.

Its minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil said, the package proposed a 90-day maternity leave plan, which also offers other perks for fathers.

"The package will not only benefit mothers, but also fathers and help balance work and personal life," she told the Dewan Rakyat today.

She said this in reply to a supplementary question from R Sivarasa (PKR-Subang) who wanted to know why the involvement of women in the labour force had not changed much from 44.1 per cent in 1980 compared to 45.7 per cent in 2008.

Earlier, in response to Sivarasa's original question, Shahrizat said the government has taken measures to increase the number of female employees.

"The government has amended the Employment Act 1955 to encourage single mothers and housewives to work part-time. The JobsMalaysia portal has also been created whereby women can register themselves and be matched to suitable jobs," she said.

Shahrizat said until March this year, 2,458 women had obtained employment with 139 companies through the 'work-from-home' programme carried out by the ministry.

"The ministry also encourages child care centres to be set up in workplaces to help women overcome the problem of finding someone to mind their children.

"To encourage employers in the private sector to set up kindergartens at the workplace, they are exempted from taxes amounting to 10 per cent of the overall cost of building the kindergarten for 10 years.

"The government will also give launch grants worth RM200,000 to public sector employers who take the initiative to offer kindergarten facilities," she added.

- Bernama