

**Rosmah launches 'Sayang' squad
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Rosmah Mansor, wife of the prime minister, today launched Wanita Umno's latest project, "Sayang" (Love), the rebranded welfare, voluntary and social programmes of the movement aimed at getting closer to the people through time spent with them.

The launch of the project, which coincided with the Wanita Umno Aidilfitri open house here, involves the setting up of "Sayang" squads and "Sayang" stores, to keep aid for distribution, in every state.

Rosmah said at the launch that political parties had to be more creative, innovative and proactive in planning political activities in the effort to be close to the people so that they remained relevant and understood the needs of the people.

She said the "Sayang" project would be able to solve problems faced by the people and bring leaders closer to them at a time when the people were conscious of their rights and were bold enough to demand them.

"The project will also be able to convince the people to continue to support Umno," she said at the launch.

Rosmah did not want the "Sayang" project to be confined to any one community or group, saying efforts must be pooled to get closer to all the people regardless of race.

"It is hoped that the project will be carried out with much love and care so that its impact is greatly felt by all the people," she said.

The launch was also attended by Prime Minister and Umno president Najib Abdul Razak, Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin, Wanita Umno chief Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Puteri Umno chief Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin.

New image for Wanita Umno

Najib told reporters later the project would portray a new image of Wanita Umno and the Barisan Nasional.

"It is hoped that all BN component parties and divisions would implement the 'Sayang' squad activities with vigour as a new programme which can boost the people's confidence in the BN government," he said.

Shahrizat told reporters the project would be able to bring Wanita Umno members closer to the people without the need for heavy financial allocation.

She said "Sayang" was a well-organised project made simple for the 1.3 million Wanita Umno members to serve the people.

"There is no special allocation for the project. All that is necessary is to give our love to those in need, such as visiting patients in hospitals, particularly those in the third-class wards," she said.

Shahrizat said the government, through the Social Welfare Department, had expended RM457 million on social welfare in the country but the "Sayang" project focused more on the time spent with the people.

"We will be engaged in work at hospitals, surau and weddings and do other simple social work to instill welfare consciousness in Wanita Umno members," she said.

She said that so far 800 Wanita Umno members had registered with the "Sayang" squads throughout the country, adding that the "Sayang" stores would be set up in every state to keep the essential goods needed for disaster relief.

The project would be carried out by Wanita Umno before it was introduced to Wanita BN, she said.

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