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'More women working now'

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Female participation up by 750,000, says Najib

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia has made significant progress in the past six years to increase the number of women in the workforce and in decision-making role in the corporate sector due to Government initiatives that sought to enhance the contribution of women to the economy and to promote greater inclusiveness in the workforce, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

Speaking at a Women in the Workforce Dialogue organised by Talent Corporation Malaysia (TalentCorp) with a group of women representing those who have returned to work under TalentCorp's Career Comeback Programme, he said Malaysia's female labour participation rate (FLPR) climbed to 54.1% in

2015 from 46.8% in 2010.

"While this is just under the 55% target set for 2015, the 7.3% increase in FLPR has resulted in an additional 750,000 women entering the workforce. This is estimated to have contributed an additional 0.3 percentage points to GDP growth per annum," he said.

Prior to 2010, the FLPR remained at around 46% for at least five years.

Najib said Malaysia was on track to meet its 30% target of women in decision-making roles in the corporate sector by 2016.

Based on annual returns compiled by Bursa Malaysia across all public-listed companies (PLCs) in 2015, women held 26.3% of top management positions across PLCs.

However, this percentage increased to 28.4% for women in top management positions in the top 100 PLCs (representing a market capitalisation of 82%), marking a substantial improvement from a diversity survey of listed companies conducted by TalentCorp and PwC in 2013, finding that women held 24% of top management positions.

TalentCorp chief executive officer Shareen Shariza Datuk Abdul Ghani said although corporate Malaysia had adopted flexible work arrangements as a strategy to attract and retain more women in the workforce, more could still be done as less than 30% of companies in Malaysia offer flexible work arrangements. — Bernama