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PM pledges equal chances for all M'sians

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PUTRAJAYA: The Government will strive harder to strengthen women's positions in all fields while ensuring equal opportunities for all irrespective of gender, race and religion.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said various steps had already been taken to aid not only women but everyone with ideas, initiative and the drive to succeed.

He cited micro-credit schemes such as Tabung Amanah Ikhtiar, Tekun and SME Corp as some of the programmes by the Government to help those keen on doing business.

"Nevertheless, I take note that there is still a gap in assistance and support being given to women who want to start businesses, especially those who want to do it online.

"*Insyah Allah*, we will from time to time find ways to lessen the gap," he said in a posting on his blog NajibRazak.com.

Najib said the role of women in nation building, workforce and education, and striking a balance between career and family were among the issues discussed during



Market visit: Najib looking at chillies at MyFarm Outlet Kasih in Precinct 7, Putrajaya, as Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority chairman Tan Sri Badruddin Amiruldin (right, in blue) looks on. The market offers fresh produce that comes directly from farms at cheaper prices and is part of government efforts to ease living costs. — Bernama

dinner with his online friends at the Modern Asian Diner in Setapak on Wednesday night.

Among those present were eye surgeon Prof Dr Muhaya Mohamad, young fashion designer Fuzana Mokhtaza, gymnast Farah Ann Abdul Hadi, crime analyst Kamal Affendi Abdul Hashim, founder of non-governmental organisation Women:Girls Low Ngai Yuen and Sikh Naujawan Sabha Malaysia women and youth development exco member Amreeta Kaur Dhillon.

"Several suggestions and ideas were put forward to me. Amreeta and Farah Ann spoke about equal opportunity to be given to men to raise children and families, as given to women," Najib noted.

He said Low raised the subject of women in religion and whether discrimination occurred due to misconception, adding that he agreed with Dr Muhaya that the best approach was *wasatiyyah* (moderation).

"In Malaysia, we are fortunate to have a diverse society under one roof. At the same time, this can be a

challenge that requires acceptance and understanding of all parties.

"God willing, if we practise moderation and learn to understand each other, Malaysia will remain peaceful and harmonious," he said.

It wasn't just all serious talk over dinner as Najib and other guests were given a quick introduction to the Snapchat application by Low and how facial animation functions.

"They also suggested that I watch the movie *Munafik*. I enjoyed the session. We all had a good laugh too," he said.