

**Malaysian Women Need To Move Beyond Present Achievements, Says Rais  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- Malaysian women need to move beyond present achievements and rise to a higher level, Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim said today.

In his speech at the opening of the 34th biennial conference of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) here, he said Malaysian women have played a decisive role in nation-building and have held key positions in organisations that are central to the country' s development.

The text of his speech was read out by deputy minister Datuk Joseph Salang.

"Nevertheless, there is no room for complacency when it comes to either gender equality or national development. The time has come for women to move beyond their present achievements and raise the bar to a higher level," Dr Rais said.

The four-day conference, with the theme "New Paradigms: Media Women Responding to Change," is organised by the Tun Abdul Razak Institute for Broadcasting and Information (IPPTAR). Sixty members attended from all over the world, including Norway, Ireland, the United States, Ireland, Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

Dr Rais said that with rapid global communication, he hoped that the conference would provide a platform for women in radio and television to exchange knowledge and share experiences on the progress of electronic media and content in response to major social trends.

"I also hope that it brings about awareness, as well as positive changes and development with a spirit of common goals, although with different approaches," he said.

IAWRT President Olya Boyar said she hoped the conference would provide an opportunity for strengthening the voices of women media practitioners, and assist them in mobilising local action to mainstream a gender perspective in the media.

She said the conference was also intended to explore how women are becoming engaged in new media, particularly social media.

On Wednesday, the conference will present the IAWRT Radio and TV Awards of Excellence from among 57 nominees, including 37 for television documentaries and 20 radio documentaries. Prize awards will be USD1,000 (about RM3,166) in each category.

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