

**Women Should Grab Opportunities, Take Risk To Succeed - Muhyiddin
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 20 (Bernama) -- Women in the country must grab existing opportunities and have the courage to face challenges and risks in order to succeed, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the government had provided many initiatives that emphasised on empowering women in various fields including education, entrepreneurship and family development.

"Every woman must have knowledge, and sharpen their skills to evaluate and utilise the knowledge provided," he said.

He said this in his speech when launching the Women's Summit 2013 organised by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, here Tuesday.

Also present were his wife, Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Rohani Abdul Karim and Secretary-General of the ministry Datuk Seri Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd Nur.

Muhyiddin said the government had placed special emphasis on continuous efforts to empower women in the various fields in the 10th Malaysia Plan (2011-2015) including boosting women's participation in the employment market to 55 per cent in 2015.

According to the ministry, women represented only 49 per cent of the labour force currently.

Realising that the main reason for women to leave their job was because they wanted to focus on their family, Muhyiddin said the government had allocated RM15 million as an incentive to encourage the establishment of more quality kindergartens at the work place.

Staggered Working Hours had also been implemented at government agencies since 2007 to fulfill the women's needs on a flexible working arrangement, he said.

On the involvement of women in entrepreneurship, Muhyiddin, who is also the Education Minister, said the programme 'Get Malaysian Business Online' that was introduced had received 1,750 applications this year with 952 applications or 54.4 per cent coming from women entrepreneurs.

On the 11th summit themed "Forging Your Own Path", the deputy prime minister said it was a clear message from the government to all women in Malaysia that it was important to develop and progress in their own mould.

"For decades, we have stood witness to the evolution of women's roles and contributions to the society, which have extended far and wide, beyond the confinement of their domestic sphere. Now is the time to move forward and explore new areas where no one has gone before.

"We are committed to ensure that the women of Malaysia be given the highest opportunities in all fields but without these women taking the opportunities, it will not be worth anything,"

he said.

Muhyiddin said a conducive environment for women to continue to progress in whatever field they ventured into was no longer a major issue but what was important was the desire and spirit to determine the platform of success that they desired.

The summit gathers 1,200 participants and has speakers from executive, professional and governmental levels domestically and internationally.

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