

## **Malaysian Women More Advanced, In Forefront - PM**

PEKAN, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- Women in Malaysia are considered more advanced and in the forefront compared those in developing countries or other Muslim countries, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the achievement was the outcome of continued commitment and agenda that was given priority by the government in addition to the women's attitude of being resilient, courageous, determined.

"Our agenda is still not over and more will be carried out. This is the ingredient for us to achieve more success. Women are not only to sit at the kitchen corner or lulling children or simply to run a household.

"But women are capable of multi-tasking besides being a mother and wife, women can add value to the family either in terms of economy or supplementing family income,' he said when opening the annual general meeting of the Pekan Women Institute at Pekan UMNO building here today.

He said women could provide valuable advice to their children so that grow up to be commendable and have good manners.

Also present was Pekan WI chairman Datuk Melati Ali.

Najib then referred to the implementation of the Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia and Tabung Ekonomi Kumpulan Usaha Niaga (Tekun) Nasional which he described as one of the successful mediums which had helped empower women.

"Since 2009, almost 2.5 million women have received micro credit loans amounting to RM13.5 billion and, what is most interesting, is that 98 per cent of the women have been able to fully repay the loans.

"That is what is special about women. They can be depended upon or as the Kelantanese say, they are 'juruh'," he said.

Najib, who is also Pekan Member of Parliament, added the WI was close to his heart and that of his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor because it was active in numerous activities that benefited its almost 2,500 members.

He hoped this would be emulated by other non-governmental organisations so that they could attract the people to join in the activities.

Meanwhile, in her speech, Melati said Pekan WI had implemented various programmes to empower women especially single mothers, including organising tailoring and bakery courses with the cooperation of government agencies.

She said that the WI could also be described as the backbone of the prime minister's programmes in Pekan as its members would be involved in the preparations.

"This is our way of helping the government in return for all that it has given us," she said.

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