



M'sian PLCs have ability to fulfil 30% women representation: BCorp Independent Director

KUALA LUMPUR: The over 900 public listed companies (PLCs) on Bursa Malaysia which currently meet 17 per cent of women representation on their boards and management, have the ability to hire and fulfil the minimum 30 per cent benchmark quota for women representation in line with the aspiration of many stakeholders.

Berjaya Corp Bhd (BCorp) Independent Director Norlela Baharudin, who is also the 30% Club Malaysia Mentoring Manager, said this is given that women today have the right and diverse skills set and talent to fill the directorship positions in PLCs.

"If you look at the past performance of companies that met the 30 per cent (women representation), data showed that their financial performance correlated to the number of women on board, which means that the more diverse the board is, the better the company performs, financially," she told the media after a roundtable session titled 'BCorp Presents - In Thin Air - Addressing The Challenges of Women in the Workplace', today.

Norlela said the correlation of having women representation not only speaks the volume about the potential of women in business, but it also manifests that women, if not equal, are better in terms of skills set and experience compared to men.

She also noted that it is not hard to look for candidates and their profiles as these are available on the 30% Club list, Institute of Corporate Directors Malaysia (ICDM), Malaysian Alliance of Corporate Directors (MACD), financial institutional developments, and other similar organisations that run programmes (that mentor woman).

"We have enough profiles to supply for that 30 per cent, but what is stopping the companies? It is the mindset and we need to change that," she said.

However, Norlela stressed that it is not simply plucking any women to be on the board, it has to go through a very careful selection process, progressed by the non-nomination committee and nomination committee.

In 2020, the **Statistics Department** reported that women contributed to over 55 per cent of the nation's economy. This means that in 2020 alone, women in Malaysia contributed RM776.9 billion to the development of this country.

Meanwhile, on being the independent director of BCorp, Norlela said women currently represents not only 57 per cent on its Board of Directors (BODs), exceeding the 30 per cent mandate, but also constitutes 57 per cent of independent BODs.

"This shows that the group likes to hear the views from outside as opposed to their own people's views," she said.

In 2021, the Malaysian Chapter of the 30% Club noted that there was 26 per cent women representation on the boards of the top 100 PLCs compared with 2018 (24 per cent), 2019 (26 per cent) and 2020 (25 per cent).

Norlela was joined by the other three independent directors of the group, namely Datin Seri Sunita Mei-Lin, Penelope Gan and Dr Jayanti Desan.

The session also addressed topics related to the obstacles women face of being recognised and credited for their work, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination, as well as the impossible requirement of a working woman to be both 100 per cent at work and home for the family. — Bernama

<https://www.thesundaily.my/business/m-sian-plcs-have-ability-to-fulfil-30-women-representation-bcorp-independent-director-DF8997207>