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KANITA – THE FIRST RESEARCH CENTRE ON GENDER IN THE COUNTRY

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USM, PENANG, 7 March 2016 – Being the first centre of excellence to be established in Malaysia in 1978 that focuses on gender research, the Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA) Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) plans to have more research on women and gender-related issues, as there is still plenty to study and to collaborate in with international institutions.

At present, KANITA is gearing towards fulfilling the plan of the university to spearhead in the establishment of a women-specific college.

According to the Director of KANITA, Associate Professor Dr. Noraida Endut, a series of workshops have been held to debate and discuss its vision, mission, objectives of its establishment and programmes offered.

"We have also visited and held discussions with a number of universities and international institutions which have a Women's College such as in Korea and Bangladesh to identify programmes with potential and to learn from their experiences in establishing their colleges," she said.

KANITA was established for the purpose of doing transdisciplinary research in issues involving women and gender. Among them are studies on women's well-being and issues relating to violence against women, sexual harassment in institutions of higher learning, fairness and justice of 'syariah' laws in issues on family, polygamy, studies on single mothers, masculinity, microcredit and entrepreneurship.

Added Noraida, the latest is the research on masculinity and the perception on domestic violence, juvenile crimes, entrepreneurship and natural disasters (flood), viewed from the perspective of gender.

In conjunction with International Women's Day 2016 with the theme "Pledge for Parity" on 8 March 2016, KANITA would be having a forum and a few performances such as presentation of songs by KANITA graduate students and a 'Zumba' session.

In addition, there will also be a special performance by students from Sekolah Kebangsaan Lemoi, presenting an 'Orang Asli' traditional dance called 'Tarian Sewang'.

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