

Crackdown on sex harassment

Govt ups ante against abusive behaviour with awareness move

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Government has upped its ante in the fight against sexual harassment, sending out thousands of flyers to remind people that it is a form of violence.

Defining sexual harassment as unwelcome behaviour in the form of written or spoken words, gestures and physical behaviour, the flyers stated that it is wrong to give out suggestive hand signals.

However, it is not sexual harassment if the recipient finds that your jokes are "acceptable".

Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Rohani Abdul Karim said the flyers were meant to educate, create awareness and inform victims of sexual harassment about what they could do.

"We are providing information on

this because it is part of our on-going campaign on respecting women," said Rohani, who distributed the flyers along with other related materials to motorists at the Sungai Besi toll plaza yesterday.

She said the move was also in conjunction with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on Nov 25.

Victims, who could be of either gender, subordinates at work or peers, can call the ministry's Talian Nur 15999 hotline if they require help.

Rohani said the reported number of cases of domestic violence were on the rise but added that this was due to greater awareness.

According to the police, there were 3,173 cases of domestic violence in 2010, 3,277 cases in 2011 and 3,488 cases last year.

She said these figures included cases where men were victims,



Making a point: (From right) Rohani, Irmohizam and the Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia undergraduates during the campaign.

which were also on the rise.

Rohani said men were victims in 30% of cases reported last year.

Misunderstandings, financial problems and infidelity were among the top reasons which led to violence at home, she said.

She said that domestic violence was not confined to just husbands and wives but also included in-laws

along with the extended family.

Also present at the launch was Kuala Selangor MP Datuk Irmohizam Ibrahim and students from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia.

The undergraduates, from the university's law faculty, donned special effects make-up to graphically drive home the point that domestic violence is not cool.