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Rafidah lauds decision to probe Wanita accounts

PORT DICKSON, Sun. - Former Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz today welcomed the party's supreme council decision to investigate the accounts of the movement.

But Rafidah said she should not be implicated in the investigations since it did not concern the financial management of previous office bearers.

Rafidah, the International Trade and Industry Minister, said: "I left office with RM1.8 million in the bank. This was the largest amount in the Wanita accounts."

"An investigation ought to be conducted in order to discover what actually transpired resulting in complaints by members. However, I wish to stress that the matter did not concern the financial management of previous office bearers."

The International Trade and Industry Minister said the new Wanita leadership should have acted immediately to appoint trustees for it's accounts.

"Last Friday, I was informed that there was money from the Wanita accounts that had been withdrawn by certain quarters and that the account had been closed," she said after attending her ministry's family day here.

She said she did not know why the money was withdrawn and was shocked to learn that the account had been closed.

"I do not know under whose authorisation the money was withdrawn".

She said previously all expenditures were approved by the executive council and during the last executive council meeting chaired by her, all accounts were scrutinised and found to be in order.

"We kept track of every single sen going in and out of the Wanita accounts," added Rafidah.

Meanwhile Wanita Umno chief Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman said the probe into the accounts of the movement was an "internal matter".

"I am leaving it to the supreme council to take action and the investigations are under way. I have no comments for now," she told reporters at the 'Jasamu dikenang' function organised by Johor Wanita Umno at the Dewan Jubli Intan in Johor Baru today.

Yesterday, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is also Prime Minister said the supreme council had ordered an investigation into Wanita Umno's accounts, following complaints by members.

Dr Mahathir said party treasurer Tun Daim Zainuddin would study the accounts and submit a report to the supreme council. The accounts to be scrutinised are ones maintained by the previous office bearers.

Asked if the probe involved missing funds or the misappropriation of funds, she replied: "I am leaving it to the supreme council... I am not answering any more questions (on the probe)".

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