

Wanita Umno ⁴⁵⁻ supports ^{S4 9.98} PM's decision

KOTABARU: Wanita Umno agrees with the Prime Minister's decision to dismiss Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as his deputy and Finance Minister, its head Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman said yesterday.

"We agree with the decision of the Prime Minister and will wait for further enlightenment from the Umno supreme council on Anwar's position," she told reporters after opening an entrepreneurship course for women here.

She also said Wanita Umno fully supported the government's measures to bring about economic recovery including the move to fix the exchange rate for the ringgit.

In Kuala Lumpur, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said Anwar's removal will not cause political instability in the country.

"One man does not make the Government. The removal of one government functionary will

not cause political instability because the rest of the government will still function," she said.

"People come and go. We have certainly seen top leaders not only leave but also die, and this did not cause political instability before," she said during a press conference here yesterday.

Rafidah said Anwar's removal would not deter genuine and serious investors, adding:

"They would have studied our country and understood that political stability is determined by the entire leadership. Political stability is not determined by the popularity of one man or woman," she said.

Rafidah said investors knew that the Malaysian Government had a good track record in establishing an environment that was conducive for investors.

"In some countries, they have wars between political parties, and the Government is made up of a minority. People com-

ing from those countries must regard our country as heaven," Rafidah said.

"We do not have a dictatorship. We work collectively as a team with the Prime Minister as our leader. What is important is that we all agree on the measures and support the mandate given," she added.

To a question, Rafidah said the Prime Minister's main concern now was to revive the economy and for everybody to work towards that goal.

"There is no point being popular in politics if the country one is leading is going 'to the dogs,'" she said.

On whether the removal would cause disunity within Umno, Rafidah said party members should view it objectively.

"If they understand that the party's struggle is not about an individual but about collectively working to benefit the party and country, there should not be any disunity," she said.