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Abdullah: Wan Azizah's denial comes too late

TAPAH, Sun. - Parti Keadilan Malaysia president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's denial that she likened Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to former Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos was too late in coming.

"She should have refuted her statement two or three days after the news report was published," Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi told reporters after opening the Umno Tapah division delegates meeting today.

Abdullah was responding to Dr Wan Azizah's denial that she had tarnished the country's name while on a three-day visit to the Philippines to seek support for her husband, former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In Kota Baru yesterday, Dr Wan Azizah denied she had likened Dr Mahathir to Marcos, claiming she upheld Malaysia's name.

However, dismissing her denial as half-hearted, Abdullah said she should not have waited.

"This had caused anger to Malaysians. If it was not true she had made such comparisons, she should have said so earlier. We have heard what she has said and we have read the news of what she has said."

She denied her statement only after triggering a backlash.

"But let her say what she wants," he said. "She is free to say that she has not said it. Let Malaysians make their own assessment."

In Kota Baru, Manisah Ismail reports that Dr Wan Azizah has urged Dr Mahathir to reveal the name of the former national leader who used his power to enrich friends and made them millionaires.

She said it would be better for Dr Mahathir to name the leader so that the people would know the truth.

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