

23 JUL 1999

Rafidah-Azizah

WAN AZIZAH'S RIGHT TO CONTEST, SAYS RAFIDAH

KUANTAN, July 23 (Bernama) -- Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail's decision to contest in the next general election is her democratic right, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said today.

"It does not matter. It is her right to contest but I am confident that a person who thinks rationally will not be carried away by overzealous support," she told reporters after meeting representatives of women's organisations in Pahang here.

She was asked to comment on Wan Azizah's statement yesterday that she would contest in the polls but had not decided on the constituency.

Rafidah said Wan Azizah's statement showed that she was not that serious in championing her husband's fate but seemed to have political ambitions.

"To me, if a wife wants to fight for her husband, as a Muslim she should pray a lot, be patient and leave it to Allah," she said.

She said Wan Azizah, the wife of former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, was now showing her interests in politics and all her actions were politically motivated.

The support shown to any individual should not cause disunity in the party, government or society, she said.

On Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's apology to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his past political battles with the Prime Minister, Rafidah said this gesture should be emulated because in politics there were no permanent enemies if there was a common struggle.

"To me this is an example because the black spot in the party was when Tengku Razaleigh mounted a challenge for the president's post, but the lesson has led us to a good path," she said.

-- BERNAMA

ROS YBY