

11/04/2001

High hopes for Puteri Umno

Sajahan Waheed

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised the newly appointed Puteri Umno central committee members to indulge in healthy practices and not involve themselves in money politics.

Puteri Umno pro-tem head Azalina Othman Said said this was among the messages given by Dr Mahathir during an hour-long meeting with Puteri Umno central committee members at his office in Putrajaya today.

"He also said that it was important for us to study and understand the party's struggles so that we could impart the knowledge to the members.

"We were also informed that it was our responsibility to create awareness among the younger generation on the progress brought by Umno which have helped all the races in the country."

Azalina said this to reporters at a dinner function with Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and the central committee members tonight.

The dinner was aimed at enabling Abdullah to get to know the Puteri Umno members better.

After chairing Puteri Umno's first central committee meeting yesterday, Azalina announced the movement's line-up which included popular singer-actress Erra Fazira as a central committee member.

The formation of Puteri Umno was announced by Dr Mahathir last July.

It was aimed at attracting young professionals who wanted to join the party but were not interested in being a part of Wanita Umno which they perceive as being made up of older members.

Abdullah said Umno had high hopes for Puteri Umno and believed the movement would be able to deliver the goods.

"We hope that many young women from different backgrounds be they professionals, factory workers or those from the rural areas will join Puteri Umno.

"Puteri Umno members should be able to continue with the party's struggles to uplift the society's status and to ensure continued progress."

Abdullah also expressed his hope that Puteri Umno central working committee members would establish strong relationship with the branch, division, Umno Youth and Wanita Umno leaders.

On the appointment of Erra Fazira, Abdullah said Umno welcomed anyone who was interested in joining the party provided that they fulfil the conditions, including the age limit.

"Erra could use her influence to bring in her fans to join Puteri Umno."

Meanwhile Azalina, when asked to comment on Erra Fazira's absence from both functions, said: "All central committee members should be given the same attention as they all are hardworking and dedicated."