

# Muhammad: Let Azalina Nst 26 AUG 2002 'continue leading Puteri

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib said Puteri Umno pro-tern chief Azalina Othman Said should be allowed to continue leading the movement.

He said she and other pro-tern committee members had done a good job since the movement was set up and, therefore, ought to be given a chance to formally manage the movement. "In all fairness, Azalina should be given the chance to continue what she and her committee had started for one term."

He believes other Umno leaders shared the same sentiment.

Under the party constitution, a Puteri Umno chief must not be above 40 years old and, hence, this will be Azalina's only chance to officially lead

the movement. There has been talk that Azalina, 38, will be challenged at the movement's inaugural November elections but no one has confirmed this.

She had responded to the rumours by saying that the post was open to anyone and that she was prepared to face any challenge.

On Monday, after a courtesy call by Azalina, Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob advised Puteri Umno members to seek a compromise and avoid a contest for the top post.

"Democracy does not mean there has to be contests, especially for top posts. Democracy does not mean Dr Mahathir (Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) must be challenged," he added.