

13/07/2002

Rafidah: People won't fall for Pas' ploy on `two prime ministers'

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Pas' claim that the country has two prime ministers is not an issue in the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections because neither voters nor investors will fall for its ploy, Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said today.

"I am confident the voters and investors are not shallow in their understanding of the country's administration.

"There has never been a case in the world of two prime ministers, and in Malaysia, it will never happen. It is just that Pas does not understand our administration," Rafidah, who is International Trade and Industry Minister, told reporters after her ministry's media briefing here.

There was currently only one Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and one Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"When Dr Mahathir retires by October 2003, Abdullah will succeed. At that time, there will still be one prime minister. And when the prime minister is on leave, there will be an acting prime minister.

"Pas should not belittle voters and investors. They are not stupid... Wanita Umno will explain this to the voters," she said.

Last Sunday, Pas central committee member Mohamad Sabu said in a ceramah that investors were confused over the transition, with some under the impression that there were two prime ministers.

Rafidah was asked to comment on this remark and its impact on Barisan Nasional's campaign for the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections.

The by-elections, set for July 18, were called following the death of Pas president Datuk Fadzil Noor on June 23. He was the Pendang Member of Parliament and Anak Bukit State Assemblyman.

On the appointment of the next Deputy Prime Minister, Rafidah said Wanita Umno would leave it to Abdullah.

Earlier, Rafidah presented a cheque for RM9,430.80 as donation to the Afghanistan Fund to Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Leo Michael Toyad.

The donation is from an ad hoc committee comprising representatives of voluntary organisations in the Federal Territory and Selangor, formed 20 years ago.

They are the Universiti Malaya Women's Association, Petaling Jaya Christian Women's Association, Selangor Ceylonese Community Services Association, Petaling Jaya Apex Club, Pertiwi, Malaysian Women Journalists' Association (Pertama), Perkumpulan Perempuan and Lembaga Kebajikan Perempuan Islam. Rafidah has been committee chairman since its formation.

The amount donated is the surplus from its various fund-raising activities, mostly in aid of children's welfare homes. The committee was disbanded as members were busy with other commitments.

According to Rafidah, the committee decided to donate to the Afghanistan Fund following notification by the bank that the money would be transferred to the Treasury as unclaimed monies if nothing was done about it.