

Stepping down? More like clinging on, says PKR

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Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's today announcement of her exit from cabinet when her senatorship term expires in April should not be deemed a resignation, said PKR vice president N Surendran.

In a statement issued today, Surendran said Shahrizat based on the Federal Constitution, her ministership automatically comes to an end on April 8 when her term as a senator expires.

"Based on the law, ministers must be appointed from members of either the Dewan Rakyat or Dewan Negara.

"Since Shahrizat's term as a senator ends on April 8, her ministership must also end in accordance with Article 43. Therefore how can Shahrizat claim to be resigning on April 8?" he asked.

Surendran, a practising lawyer, was commenting on the legal aspects of Shahrizat's announcement today that she is "stepping down" after several years as women, family and community development minister.

This comes after she endured about five months of ridicule over her links with the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) saga.

Surendran pointed out that instead of stepping down, Shahrizat was in actual fact clinging on to her cabinet position until the very end of the term.

"This announcement is a transparent attempt to deceive the public into thinking that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and the BN are taking action on the NFC scandal, and that Shahrizat is taking responsibility for her conduct," he said.

Surendran also expressed shock on the Umno women chief's unwillingness to relinquish her party position in a go.

"This proves that UMNO does not have the will, inclination or moral authority to take action against leaders guilty of wrongdoing. Is it because so many of the current Umno leaders are themselves tainted?

"Najib must prove that his claims of reform and good governance are not hollow slogans intended merely to win votes," he said.

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