

## **BN takes potshot at PKR over Shahrizat's resignation**

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Describing minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's decision to resign as a "sacrifice" for Umno, its leaders have taken a swipe at the PKR president for holding on to her post although she is married to 'a convict'.

"Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail continued to be PKR president when her husband Anwar Ibrahim was pronounced guilty (of corrupt practice in 1999). Why didn't she resign?" asked Ahmad Maslan (right), the deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

"What (Shahrizat) did is a sacrifice. She doesn't have to step down from her party post. Her husband was (only charged) in court, not pronounced guilty."

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Noh Omar said Shahrizat is a "sincere leader".

"The matter has nothing to do with her, the company (National Feedlot Corporation, NFC) belongs to her husband but she took a decision to not drag the government into the issue," Noh told reporters at the Parliament lobby today.

He lambasted the opposition for the hue and cry it has caused, and said he is proud of Shahrizat for her decision.

"In Umno, if a member is convicted, the membership is stripped with immediate effect. But you look at the opposition, even if they are found guilty they will not resign," he said.

### Mixed views

Also commenting, Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein noted: "This is an allegation played up by the opposition. But when she decided to step down, even that is not enough. This is because, what is important for them (the opposition) is not justice but politics."

Shahrizat had announced yesterday that she would step down as Women, Community and Family Development Minister when her tenure as senator expires on April 8. However, she has refused to relinquish her post as the head of BN Wanita and Wanita Umno.

Umno leaders have lauded her "sacrifice in the interest of the government and party".

Critics, however, have said that she is technically "clinging on to her cabinet post until the very end of the term".

Shahrizat has been under sustained pressure since last October over alleged irregularities in the management of the NFC, a company owned by the members of her family.

The opposition with PKR in the lead has accused Shahrizat's husband and NFC chairperson Mohamad Salleh Ismail and their three children - Wan Shahinur Izran, Wan Izzana Fatimah Zabedah and Wan Shahinur Izmir who are on the board of directors - of abusing a RM250 million government soft loan awarded for the company's cattle farming project.

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