

Rafidah: You call that 'quitting'?

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Former Wanita Umno chief Rafidah Aziz today lambasted her successor Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, saying the women, family and community development minister made no real sacrifice in announcing her 'resignation'.

The former international trade and industry minister explained that Shahrizat's ministerial post would lapse the day her senatorship expires on April 8, whether she made that last Sunday announcement or not.

"Quit? What quit...? There is no issue of stepping down or resigning! There is nothing to step down from as she is legally no longer a minister on April 8..."

"So, really there is no sacrifice as it is a natural sequence of events," Rafidah is quoted as saying by the Malay Mail today.

Yesterday, BN leaders including Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin heaped praises on Shahrizat for making a "major sacrifice" by announcing that she will 'resign' when her term as senator ends.

Rafidah, who was the first to call for Shahrizat to quit the cabinet, also said the latter's refusal to resign while her senatorship was still valid had hurt Umno and the government.

She added that Shahrizat's decision to hang on to her Wanita Umno chief post would also be problematic.

However, she conceded that Shahrizat was elected to the post by party delegates, and therefore "it is her prerogative" whether to let go of the post or not.

Though Rafidah retained her Kuala Kangsar parliamentary seat in the 2008 general election, she was ousted as Wanita Umno chief by Shahrizat in 2009.

Shahrizat, who was defeated in her Lembah Pantai seat by political novice Nurul Izzah Anwar of PKR, was however made a senator and retained as a cabinet minister.

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