

Wanita leader: Shahrizat should quit wing's post, too
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Some in the Wanita Umno leadership believe that their leader Shahrizat Abdul Jalil should not just leave her cabinet post but must let go of her position as the women's wing head as well.

Bogged by the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC) scandal involving the misuse of an RM250 million government soft loan for cattle-breeding by her husband and children, Shahrizat announced that she would leave her post as women, family and community development minister on April 8.

NONE This will coincide with the expiry of her term as senator, which made her eligible to serve in the cabinet after having lost her Lembah Pantai parliamentary seat to political newcomer Nurul Izzah Anwar in the 2008 general election.

"What is proper when this happens is for the person to relinquish both posts - in the cabinet and the party as well," Wanita Umno central committee member Seripah Noli Syed Hussin told Malaysiakini.

"We, Wanita Umno, are 'orang Umno' (party faithful), not merely members. As 'orang Umno', we put the party first, not personal interests."

She said Shahrizat's decision to relinquish her cabinet post but to stay on as Wanita chief was a decision made by Shahrizat herself.

NONE However, Seripah said, there was no indication of trouble in Wanita following Shahrizat's decision and that she believed the movement was not affected as its machinery was strong and capable.

"There is no impact on Wanita... I have not heard of a revolt in the machinery," said Seripah.

She said the voices calling for Shahrizat to vacate her seat as the women wing's chief were not just her own.

"There are voices calling for her to let go of both posts," she said.

'We want her to stay'

However, Seripah's views were not shared by several other Wanita Umno leaders contacted by Malaysiakini.

NONE Federal Territory Wanita chief Khadijah Alang Ibrahim said no matter what, the movement would remain loyal to Shahrizat.

"What she went through is a normal problem. Leaders come and go.

"Anyway, she will not resign as Wanita chief because she was not appointed... she won, she was elected to the post.

"She still does her work for Wanita and her division is also working on as usual.

"At this time, we do not think of those things (her resignation)," Khadijah said.

Her position was echoed by Bukit Katil division Wanita chief Hazizah Mohd Sultan, who said Shahrizat still had a long way to go in her journey with the movement.

"She is a capable leader. There is no one who can replace her," said Hazizah, who also called on Shahrizat to stay on in the office she was elected to by the grassroots.

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