

Shahrizat misused ministry funds, alleges PKR

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Opposition party PKR has accused a former Umno minister of “misappropriating” ministry allocations to fund Wanita Umno activities and functions.

NONE “The use of public funds to pay for party activities that financially benefits party leaders is a serious offence under the law,” stressed Wanita PKR chief Zuraida Kamaruddin (right).

The monies, she claimed, were channeled through the Majlis Pembangunan Wanita dan Keluarga (MPWK) formed under the ambit of the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry once headed by former senator Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, who is currently Wanita Umno chief.

MPWK, which was supposed to comprise of women’s exco members from each state, was however hijacked by the Wanita Umno state and division level leadership at the council’s state and district level respectively, Zuraida claimed.

Allocations of over RM5 million a year were then allegedly funneled for Wanita Umno activities and functions disguised under MPWK for 11 years, since the council’s founding in 2001, amounting to RM55 million.

All this, Zuraida alleged, happened under Shahrizat’s watch while she was still Women, Family and Community Development Minister.

She added that PKR has proof of the matter and will expose everything pending an explanation and urgent action from Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who is in charge of the ministry for the moment.

She furnished the press with a copy of a letter purportedly from MPWK to a Wanita Umno division leader in Kuala Lumpur asking for reply to an invitation to a function and telling her that all travel claims and expenses can be reimbursed from the council’s operational allocations.

Other proof, Zuraida claimed, was being withheld until Najib can respond to them.

Dismantle MPWK

They are demanding that Shahrizat resign as Wanita Umno head, Najib dismantle the MPWK which they claim is an illegal and unregistered organisation, an internal investigation launched into the extent of the alleged misappropriation and for the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency to investigate.

Failure to comply would see them disclose their evidence to the public, warned Zuraida.

Shahrizat’s aide when contacted over the matter by Malaysiakini, said that he will refer the allegations to the Wanita Umno chief for her response.

This is the second allegation of corruption linked to Shahrizat levelled by PKR. Previously the opposition party had accused her husband and children of misappropriating money from a RM250 million government funded national feedlot and cattle rearing project, the now infamous NFC scandal.

Shahrizat and her family have maintained their innocence, though the matter became the target of both the MACC and police Commercial Crimes Investigation Department, with her husband and NFC chairperson Salleh Ismail currently facing charges of CBT and breaching the Companies Act.

The former minister had resigned her cabinet post after mounting public pressure over the NFC scandal,

but has held on tenaciously to her party post, despite many voices from within and without Umno calling for her to let go of her Wanita chief post as well.

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