

Shahrizat chided for snide remark
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A motion tabled by Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff (PAS-Rantau Panjang), calling for a RM100 deduction from Women, Family and Community Development Minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's salary, stirred a commotion in Parliament today.

NONEIt was however, rejected.

Siti Zailah, when debating the motion, said the ministry was not transparent when disbursing financial aid to the poor, especially in Kelantan.

The debate took on a heated stance when Shahrizat, who rose to respond, conveyed her condolences to Siti Zailah over the demise of the latter's child, and requested Muslim members in the House to offer prayers to the deceased.

Deputy Dewan Rakyat Speaker Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar then chided Shahrizat for her action, reasoning it was not in accordance with the regulations of the meeting.

At this juncture, a few opposition members, including Chong Eng (DAP-Bukit Mertajam) and Zuraida Kamaruddin (PKR-Ampang), stood up and said that a minister should not mix official and personal matters.

Rushing to Shahrizat's rescue, backbenchers Bung Mokhtar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan) and Mohamad Aziz (BN-Sri Gading) described the opposition's remarks as politicising the matter.

Wan Junaidi then told members of the House not to make noise and allowed Shahrizat to continue with her answer.

"As the minister in-charge of, among others, the people's welfare, I am concerned with issues like this," she said.

She said she could have also requested for Siti Zailah's salary to be deducted because from feedback she had obtained, Rantau Panjang did not look after her constituents.

This led to verbal exchanges involving several members of the opposition and the backbenchers, which only stopped after Wan Junaidi interrupted.

Shahrizat said the government had spent RM840 million to provide welfare aid for 441,018 people, including voters in Rantau Panjang.

"In Kelantan alone, more than RM65 million was spent to help 31,128 recipients, when the state government only spent RM15 million for the same purpose," she added.

Earlier, the Dewan Rakyat rejected a motion to deduct the salaries of Health Minister Liow Tiong Lai, Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Peter Chin Fah Kui and Information

Communication and Culture Minister Rais Yatim.

The Parliament sitting continues tomorrow.

- Bernama

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