

Shahrizat made special adviser with minister status
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Umno women's wing deputy chief Shahrizat Abdul Jalil has been appointed a special adviser to the prime minister with the status of minister on women and social development affairs. MCPX

According to Bernama, the Prime Minister's Department said the appointment will be effective starting tomorrow.

The department said in executing her duties and responsibilities, Shahrizat will work closely with the women, family and community development ministry.

At present, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has two special advisers with the status of minister - for Islamic affairs and foreign affairs.

The announcement came hours after Abdullah's press conference today where he unveiled his new cabinet.

Meanwhile, a group of 50 Wanita Umno members went to the Abdullah's official residence in Putrajaya this evening in an attempt to see the prime minister to express their disappointment in their leader, Rafidah Aziz, being dropped from the cabinet.

Rafidah, who is Wanita Umno chief, was not reappointed as international trade and industry minister, a post which she had held for almost 20 years.

The Wanita Umno group dispersed 10 minutes later when no one from the prime minister's residence came out to receive them.

Shocking defeat

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With the appointment of Shahrizat as special adviser, she would be only Wanita Umno representative in the cabinet.

Shahrizat - who was the former women, family and community development minister - lost in the March 8 polls to PKR's Nurul Izzah Anwar for the Lembah Pantai parliamentary constituency.

Nurul Izzah, 27, is the daughter of former deputy premier and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Shahrizat's defeat in the constituency, which she held for three terms since 1995, was unexpected.

Shahrizat became the first minister for women and family development when the ministry was created by former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad in 2001.

Later, Abdullah revamped the ministry and renamed it women, family and community

development ministry.

Shahrizat was also acting federal territories minister in 2005 when Isa Abdul Samad had to step down from the post.

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