

Najib : I respect Wanita Umno's decision
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Beh Lih Yi

Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today said he respected the decision of Wanita Umno to stick to its original transition plan in June, three months later than the parent body.

"I don't interfere, I respect whatever Wanita's decision is. If that's their position, I respect (it)," he told a press conference after launching the two-day national sports convention in Kuala Lumpur.

Najib, who is also Umno deputy chief and slated to take over the top post in the party polls next March, added it was common to have different opinions in politics when asked if the decision may cause a split within the women's wing.

Asked on whether the transition plan should be brought forward to March to coincide with the transition at the parent body level, he replied: "I am not giving my personal view, I respect whatever decision (they make). I am sure they have considered all factors."

Pressed for more comments, the deputy premier reiterated he respected the decision and he "did not want to fight with the women".

Unanimous decision

At a six-hour meeting yesterday, Wanita Umno decided that its deputy Shahrizat Abdul Jalil will not challenge incumbent Rafidah Aziz in the March party polls to allow the latter to retain the post without a fight.

rafidah and shahrizat 070904It was also unanimously decided that Rafidah will stick to an earlier agreement to hand over power to Sharizat in June, thus enabling the younger woman to act as the acting head of the movement after that.

The decision came only a day after Shahrizat has asked Rafidah to bring forward the transition plan, preferably to March to coincide with the party polls.

The Wanita deputy chief said yesterday she respected the decision but will continue to take initiatives to negotiate with her possible challenger Kamilia Ibrahim and Rafidah.

Kamilia, a Wanita exco member, has secured enough nominations to contest the post held by Shahrizat presently.

Also present at the launching this morning was Najib's wife, Rosmah Mansor and Youth and Sports Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

At the launch, Najib also announced the setting up of national badminton academy, which will be led by Rosmah.

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