

Let a woman put things right in Umno

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While their menfolk are involved in the most despicable money politics, I wish to call upon Wanita Umno, the real power-brokers in Umno (since most Umno members are women), that they too should take some drastic action.

First they should dump the top two maharani Rafidah Aziz and her deputy Shahrizat Abdul Jalil and bring in somebody who really could bring about dynamism and vision to the movement.

As of now Rafidah is insisting that she wants to defend her No 1 position in Umno Wanita while at the same time, she has promised to hand over the helm to Shahrizat.

If that is not the politics of feathering your own nests, I don't know what is.

So it is quite laughable to describe Rafidah Aziz and Shahrizat Jalil as the 'Iron Lady' and 'Steel Magnolia' respectively because in my books they are nothing but great betrayers of Wanita Umno.

After 24 years as leader, Rafidah (a former economics lecturer) and her sidekick Shahrizat (a lawyer) can only claim that they were very successful in perpetuating the status quo that Wanita Umno would remain as 'tea ladies' in Umno.

If there are appointments of women in senior positions in the various sectors, these women would insist that they are there strictly on merit.

The progress that Wanita Umno should have brought about in Umno and to the country is that by now, there should be several women already duly elected to the higher echelons of Umno.

Now is the time to congratulate former MCA Wanita chief Dr Ng Yen Yen who dared to shake the very foundations of MCA by contesting for one of the MCA vice-president's posts and winning.

And one day a woman may be the president of MCA.

And also felicitations to Sabah Beaufort Division's Wanita Umno chief who dared to stand against her own division chief, a deputy minister no less. That's dynamism.

Thus it is even a bigger joke when both Rafidah and Shahrizat start telling Puteri Umno leaders who have to stop down due to reaching the age limit that they should 'know their places' and not be too eager to contest for posts in Wanita.

Things would have been different if Rafidah and a few ex-Wanita leaders are contesting Umno supreme council posts such as for vice-presidents, deputy president or even the president's post.

Malaysia is no Saudi Arabia or Yemen. If Islamic countries like Bangladesh (more conservative than Malaysia) or equally progressive ones like Indonesia and Pakistan could accept women prime ministers, why can't Rafidah, Shahrizat and other senior Wanita leaders make a change and fight for equal rights in Umno?

We all know that all organisations and institutions, be they political, corporate, NGOs or social, would, at some point or other, face a leadership crisis and in this day and age, only the best candidate, male or female, should be entrusted with the job of putting things right.

And Umno is definitely going through such a crisis now because in addition to its widespread money

politics, SMS threats and God knows what else, those men at top of the party are definitely 'election' liabilities.

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