

Pak Lah to mediate in Wanita Umno crisis
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Umno president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is set to play the role of a mediator to solve the ongoing leadership crisis in the Wanita Umno wing.

He will be meeting Wanita Umno leaders as soon as he returns home from his official visit to central Asia this Friday to help solve the movement's problem.

abdullah ahmad badawi najib razak pc change portfolio 170908 06Abdullah, who is the prime minister, is presently at Uzbekistan and will head to Turkmenistan later today.

According a Bernama report, Abdullah is quoted as saying that he would try to help the Wanita wing solve its problems without taking any sides.

He said he was willing to meddle into the wing's leadership transition crisis following the wing's failure to solve its own problem.

The issue on hand at the wing revolves around Wanita chief Rafidah Aziz's plan to contest for the March party polls to retain her position and then hand over the mantle to her deputy in June.

At the moment her deputy is Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, who had so far agreed to stick to the transition plan, thus ruling out any contest for the top post despite receiving a substantial number of nominations to do so.

Shahrizat facing challenge

However the problem with this transition plan is that another veteran Wanita Umno executive council member Kamilia Ibrahim has also indicated her wish to contest for the wing's deputy post, thus taking on Shahrizat in the coming party polls.

batu talam nominations 170107 shahrizatWhile Shahrizat remains the favourite to win the contest to retain her post, the fear is that the infighting in the run up to the polls would be too divisive to be remedied later.

Delegates have also voiced their concerns that by handing over the leadership in June, Rafidah would be imposing a heavy burden on her deputy - who would then become the acting chief - in leading the wing all alone for the next general election.

Numerous state Wanita leaders have said that Rafidah should just step down in March to allow Shahrizat to be elected as the wing's chief. This arrangement would also allow Kamilia - who is the Kuala Kangsar division Wanita chief, to be voted in as the deputy chief.

So far, Rafidah has rejected these calls. Shahrizat meanwhile has also come under pressure from her supporters to just mount a challenge for the top post.

It is in this background that Abdullah has now said that he wanted to help the wing.

He hoped that the movement's elections would not lead to disunity that could weaken it.

