

Rafidah: Not another 1987, Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR: Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz has made an impassioned appeal to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to ease his attacks on his successor and the Government.

"Please, Tun, remember what happened to you the last time (in the 1987 Umno election when the party was split)? Don't let it happen to Datuk Seri Abdullah (Ahmad Badawi). We don't need this.

"Please, let's help the party, help the country. We recognise all your contributions but, please, let Abdullah run the Government," appealed Rafidah, who is

also International Trade and Industry Minister.

She said she was deeply saddened by the prolonged criticisms of the former Prime Minister against his successor.

"No Prime Minister enjoys 100% support. Dr Mahathir should be the first to know this because he was severely criticised during his tenure.

"He almost lost the presidency in the contest with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (in 1987) and he could not even garner a 50-vote majority.

"He should remember the harsh criticism from Umno members and the

public against him.' But the 'majority of us rallied behind him and he won - but by a razor thin majority," said Rafidah.

She stressed that Abdullah should be allowed to run the government. Rafidah said that as a Cabinet minister and Wanita Umno chief, she supported Abdullah as the leader.

She also stressed that Abdullah had allowed full debate during all the Cabinet meetings and while some of the decisions made might have been painful they were made with collective consensus.