

How wings tackled Dr M issue

HARD-HITTING, kind and direct - this was how the chiefs of the Wanita, Youth and Puteri wings respectively handled the contentious Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad issue in their policy speeches.

Each of the three movement leaders also stressed their unequivocal support for Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as party president and Prime Minister.

Umno Wanita head Datuk

Seri Rafidah Aziz said dissatisfaction should not be the reason for anyone to topple leaders or taint and create problems for the party and Government.

She added that everyone had the right to speak, the right to point out and the right to criticise another person and even the Government.

"However, no one has the right to throw accusations that are untrue and slanderous," she said.

Rafidah, who is International Trade and Industry Minister, said there would always be dissatisfaction within Umno as not everybody would get their wishes fulfilled.

However, she added, Umno's power and credibility would be eroded if the party continued to be harassed with elements which could lead to disunity.

"We, as party members, must continue to remind ourselves that united we stand, divided

we fall. Let us be together with the party president and the leadership so that Umno, God-willing, will continue to lead the Barisan Nasional in a Government that serves the rakyat and the country," she said.

Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein pledged the wing's support for Abdullah and said the movement has also not forgotten contributions made by past leaders, including Dr Mahathir.

He stressed that while the party president enjoyed loyalty and undivided support, party members also respected and loved past leaders.

"This is the Malay culture and etiquette," he said, telling Dr Mahathir that the party was indebted to him and calling on Abdullah to continue leading them.

Hishammuddin said the Youth wing believed that loyalty was the strength of the party

and the country.

He added that Islam taught people to respect differences of opinion as long as the intention was noble and good for the people.

Puteri Umno chief Datuk Noraini Ahmad, pledging the wing's support for Abdullah, said Umno did not need two persons helming the party.

"There is no need for two people to lead the party. We remain loyal to the president," she said.