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PM: Shahrizat is an adviser

Abdullah: There will be no overlapping of roles between her and Ng

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PUTRAJAYA: There will be no overlapping of roles by Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen and Special Adviser to the Prime Minister for Women and Social Development Affairs Datuk Seri Shahrizat Jalil.

Clarifying the matter yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah

Ahmad Badawi said Shahrizat would advise on Islamic Family Law issues as there was a large population of Muslim women in the country.

"Both leaders can work together and reach a consensus on certain issues; all that is needed is coordination," he said, adding that both Shahrizat and Dr Ng understood their roles.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the first Cabinet meeting at his office here yesterday, Abdullah said no one should assume that Shahrizat was a Cabinet member.

He said she was appointed an adviser who would enjoy the benefits of a minister but would not be part of the Cabinet and would not sit in Cabinet meetings.

Former ambassador to Indonesia Tan Sri Mohamad Rahmat and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for Religious Affairs Tan Sri Hamid Othman, he said, played similar roles with ministerial status.

"I also have an adviser on foreign affairs but it does not disturb Wisma Putra in any way but on the contrary, his presence in my office is

seen by Wisma Putra as a helping hand.

"Although we have Islamic Development Department, Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia and state religious bodies, the adviser on religious affairs has not been a hindrance and similarly Shahrizat will not make it difficult for Ng to perform well in her ministry," he said.