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Shahrizat: Mahathir's move unacceptable

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'DISAPPOINTED':
Wing has always been loyal to party president, says chief

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WANITA Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil is saddened by the Mahathir-Kit Siang declaration to topple a democratically elected prime minister.

She said the wing could not accept that Tun Dr Mahathir, a former Umno president, had conspired with his arch-rival.

"Wanita Umno cannot accept his (Dr Mahathir) and Lim's declaration. After it was announced, many in Umno and in the country were upset that Dr Mahathir was willing to conspire with a DAP leader."

Shahrizat said this after receiving a courtesy call from 23 women of the Women's Political Caucus of Indonesia at the wing's headquarters here yesterday.

She said the wing rejected the declaration and was disappointed

that several senior Umno leaders were present at the signing on Friday.

"I stress that we will not, and cannot, accept this declaration. We are upset with the Umno leaders who had voluntarily sat with the opposition.

"Despite all the political turmoil and crises, Wanita Umno has been loyal to the party president.

"Even throughout the 22 years that Dr Mahathir served as party president, Wanita Umno was the backbone of the party despite the challenges and obstacles he faced."

She said no political party was without any trouble, but added that party members must hold on to its core values and remain united to overcome such problems.

"If we hold on to this principle and understand that every leader, even party president Datuk Seri Najib Razak, had their own troubles, we can conquer them.

"God willing, with the support of party members and the people, Barisan Nasional and Umno can win the next general election," Shahrizat said.

In **Johor Baru**, state Umno liaison

committee secretary Md Jais Sarday said the Umno Disciplinary Board should give Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin a chance to explain why he signed the declaration.

He said while the matter was within the jurisdiction of the Disciplinary Board, any deliberation on it must also take into account the explanation given by Umno leaders who signed the Mahathir-Kit Siang declaration.

"If the board still finds that his action breached the party's ethics, then it is up to the board to decide on the next course of action," said Jais.

The fate of the trio — Muhyiddin, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal and former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir — who supported the declaration would be decided in a Supreme Council meeting on March 25.

Other signatories of the declaration, led by Dr Mahathir and DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang, were PKR deputy president Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, and other opposition leaders and anti-government activists.

Johor Umno Youth chief Hahasrin

Hashim said the recent actions of current and former Umno leaders had affected the youth's view of the party, further isolating Umno's position in the eyes of the younger generation.

"The youth feel that the actions by several current and former party leaders have widened the gap between Umno and the people.

"This is worrying, as the movement is in the midst of preparing for the next general election."

Hahasrin expressed confidence that the Umno leadership would overcome the problem and bridge the gap.

Johor Umno information chief Datuk Samsol Bari Jamali said the party could not afford to have leaders going against the party's regulations or code of conduct.

"Violating party regulations is not the best option for the wellbeing of the party, which is the backbone of the government.

"The respect we accord to our leaders is based on the examples they have set and their leadership qualities.

"We should not insult our own intelligence.

"The people are watching and many are disgusted at actions that go overboard," said Samsol. **Additional reporting by Chuah Bee Kim**



Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil