

Reconsider resignation calls, Bung urges Shahrizat
The Malaysian Insider
December 03, 2011
By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 — Although his colleagues are evading the touchy cattle scandal involving Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Umno MP Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin stood by his call for her resignation today, agreeing the issue has become a liability to the party.

The outspoken Kinabatangan MP even dismissed the apparent unanimous show of support for Shahrizat during the Wanita Umno general assembly on Wednesday, saying, "We do not know what kind of support that was".

"Because no delegate has stated clearly what is that support — support for the party, yes, I know," he pointed out when met at the sidelines of the Umno general assembly today.

When asked if he believes the issue has become a liability to Umno, Bung Mokhtar (picture) nodded.

"I believe, because I am a strong party man," he said.

The Umno supreme council member said although Shahrizat had briefly explained the issue during the assembly, it was more important to take cognisance of public perception.

"This is not a question of explanation. I feel she has given her explanation already.

"This is not a question of who is wrong... it is a question of how the public accepts it," he said.

Bung Mokhtar reasoned that in the face of coming elections, it was important that Umno not be weakened by scandals linked to any individual.

"So I have already stated my stand — I request that she reconsider (resigning)... because of one individual, the party gets involved," he complained.

When addressing delegates during the women wing's assembly, Shahrizat said she had nothing to do with the RM250 million federally-funded cattle farming project and urged PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to resign over the allegations.

She reportedly earned wild applause from wing members during her speech.

The Malaysian Insider however understands that Shahrizat's explanation had failed to satisfy a number of leaders in the party who, like Bung Mokhtar, believe the senior minister should bow out of the coming polls.

Bung Mokhtar has been openly critical of the National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal and was the first Umno leader who called on Shahrizat to explain herself.

The Auditor-General's Report released last month had criticised the NFC, pointing out that it was now "in a mess".

The report said production in 2010 was only 3,289 head of cattle or 41.1 per cent of the target set.

But Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar responded on October 31 that the project was a success as it met its target of 8,000 cattle by 2010 once 5,742 slaughtered cattle were taken into account.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/reconsider-resignation-calls-bung-urges-shahrizat/>