

She quit in party's best interest, say Umno leaders

TheStarOnline

March 12, 2012

PETALING JAYA: Umno has welcomed Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil's decision to step down as Women, Family and Community Development Minister, saying that she has done it in the party's interest.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal said Shahrizat had made the right decision in relinquishing her Cabinet post on April 8 but continuing as Wanita Umno chief.

"I believe she made the right and timely decision in the interest of the party and Government," he said, stressing that her announcement had nothing to do with pressure from the Opposition.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had appointed Shahrizat to the Cabinet despite her losing the Lembah Pantai parliamentary seat as he recognised the role of women in the country.

"She is willing to give it up and we appreciate that. One must be able to segregate the roles played within the party and Government," he said, pointing out that Shahrizat had been elected to head the women's wing.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor said only Shahrizat knew the "best decision" for herself and the party.

"This will allow authorities to investigate the case transparently," he said.

Umno supreme council member Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin said he respected the decision.

"The party respects her wishes and we hope that the Opposition will also respect her by stopping their attacks."

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