

Shahrizat defends Permatang Pauh comments, claims Nurul Izzah distorting truth

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By Melati A. Jalil

Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil today defended her remarks that the Permatang Pauh parliamentary constituency is in need of development, insisting that her words reflect the true situation there.

She said she was not being sarcastic, adding that Nurul Izzah Anwar, the eldest daughter of jailed opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who previously held the Permatang Pauh seat, knew what she said was the truth.

"It is hard for some quarters to accept the reality. I spoke the truth, I wasn't making a sarcastic (statement). That is the reality," she told reporters after the launch of Pasarnita@Tom's Bazaar, Publika in Kuala Lumpur.

"Nurul Izzah felt the pressure because I spoke the truth. If she wants to spin it, that is up to her. But in her heart, she knows what I said was the truth."

Stressing that there was no ulterior motive behind her words, Shahrizat added: "These people, when we speak the truth, they spin it. I already expected it (Nurul's response). As far as I am concerned, I was speaking the truth."

Shahrizat was reported by Bernama yesterday as saying that the Permatang Pauh constituency was not a "private limited company", but a constituency in need of a member of parliament who is able to bring development and progress to the people.

She said the feedback collected by Wanita Umno from the grassroots revealed that voters in Permatang Pauh longed for development and were fed up with the opposition's unkept promises.

She said the feedback also revealed that voters in the constituency were sick and tired of the "pi mai pi mai tang tu" (unchanged) political scenario in the constituency, which involved different candidates, but from the same family, even after 17 years.

Reacting to Shahrizat's remarks, Nurul Izzah, the Lembah Pantai MP, said in derision that Shahrizat should be ashamed for making such a statement.

"There is a Wanita Umno head who does not know shame to say Permatang Pauh is a private company.

"I want to say, if (you) want to learn, listen up, we are not like NF Corp (National Feedlot Corp) or NFC that used funds and involved family members in a project meant for the people.

"When we talk of struggle, it means that our children and family members are involved in fighting oppression of the people," she said last night.

Shahrizat, the former women, family and community development minister, was forced to resign the post in April 2012.

This followed the revelation that her husband, NFCorp chairman Datuk Seri Mohamad Salleh Ismail, and their three children were accused of misusing public funds in the venture.

Salleh is facing charges of criminal breach of trust involving RM49.7 million and for violating the Companies Act in relation to RM49 million in federal funds given to NFCorp. – April 12, 2015.

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