

PM's, DPM's reputations on the edge
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A recent article posted on a popular Malaysian blog poses a serious threat both to the reputation of this nation and its leadership as well as to press freedom if the claims in the article are untrue. Likewise, if the claims are true, then it certainly demands serious and urgent remedy before we become a laughing stock of the world around us.

The article titled 'The Corridors of Power' and dated Feb 21, 2007 contains several statements that will send chills down any reader's spine. Touching on the leadership and several personalities, here are some samples quoted below:

On the honorable Prime Minister, the article claims: "Relating the dinner incident where the former prime minister had apparently announced the appointment of the deputy prime minister, the article states 'Pak Lah was caught off-guard. ... and he stormed out of the room and instructed his aids (aides) to order a total news blackout on Mahathir's statement'.

'(That) Pak Lah married Jean Danker on Jan 22, 2007 while others say he will be marrying her tomorrow, Feb 22, 2007' and that 'it seems his daughter, Nori, went berserk when she found Jean in Pak Lah's bedroom'.

And of his family members, the article goes on to claim that 'the son who already has RM1.5 billion worth of government contracts to his credit' and 'the very greedy and in-a-hurry son-in-law'.

The deputy prime minister was also not spared and the following are some of the claims made in the said article: 'And the fact that Mahathir now considers Najib a liability' (and) 'If Rosmah just knew that Mahathir considers her as one of Najib's stumbling blocks'.

The article further goes on to allege: 'Rosmah screamed at Najib and slapped him in the presence of some visitors'. (On a visit by) four people who came to meet Najib, the article claims that, 'Rosmah came out to interrogate them as to whether they were there to talk about politics or business. When one of them asked what the difference was, Rosmah replied that if they wanted to talk about politics then they can meet Najib, but if it was about business then they should talk to her instead'.

And that at 'one Ministry of Defence meeting was chaired by Rosmah while Najib just sat there quietly as Rosmah took the chair as the de facto defence minister" (and subsequently) 'Rafidah Aziz actually raised this matter at one cabinet meeting'.

The article also ends with a promise with a 'next episode' to 'reveal how Najib spent RM50 million to buy support from 25 Umno divisions in Sabah'.

The entire article including some of the highlights as given above are very disturbing. It raises two fundamentals that must be acted upon with immediacy if we are to save the face of this nation in the global community. And equally, if we are to restore rights and justice in defence of country, king and rakyat.

First, the leadership and those implicated in this article have to rise to the occasion and show themselves clean. If they are unable to do so, then the article stands to hold water of sorts and this will continue to add to the damage.

Trying to brush it aside as inconsequential is not the appropriate solution. Immediate action must be taken if the claims are unfounded and surely the rakyat will back this measure all the way.

Second, if it is true that the content of the article is false and with mala fide (bad faith) intent beyond doubt, then appropriate action must be taken against those responsible for publishing such an article.

And in doing so, justice, too, must be dispensed in full measure and made transparent. And if the writer has proof beyond doubt, it is morally right that all evidence be presented in the open.

If there is truth, let the truth prevail and there should be no killing of the messenger.

In our combined efforts to build a nation and keep it sustainable, it is important that there is no room for lies and corruption. There has to be dignity in all of us irrespective of our calling. If anyone is guilty of prostituting that trust and honour placed in them by the citizens, then it is best that those guilty face the consequences of a just and honourable society.

Likewise, where there is no truth in such claims then it is tantamount to jeopardising this nation and as such, punishment must be meted out. In this age and time where calls for rights and justice are heard all across the globe, let us stand up tall and walk proud before the world.

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