

Najib's 'Kazakhstan visit for wedding' claim unfounded
Malaysiakini.com
June 9, 2011

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has described as “totally unfounded” claims by certain quarters that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak’s visit to Kazakhstan was for the wedding of his daughter.

In a letter to Malaysiakini, the ministry's Department of Information and Public Diplomacy said the visit was to reciprocate the visit by that the Central Asian country's president to Malaysia in 2006.

It was also made to coincide with the 7th World Islamic Economic Forum (7th WIEF) from June 7 to 9 June in that country's capital of Astana, said the department.

Glaringly, however, the letter did not deny that Najib and members of his family had visited his future in-laws during the official visit to Kazakhstan.

PAS MP Dzulkefly Ahmad had earlier this week questioned the moral propriety of Najib's attendance of a function hosted by the family of his daughter Nooryana Najwa fiance during his working visit to Kazakhstan.

Regardless of the reason Najib "may concoct" to justify coinciding his visit to Kazakhstan with the visit to his future in-laws, Dzulkefly said the fact remains that the premier is misusing his station for personal reasons.

The department letter, which did not contain the signature of any official, said Najib's visit to Kazakhstan is to fulfil his acceptance of the long-standing invitation by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev to his country.

“The visit which took place on 5 to 6 June 2011 was the Prime Minister's first official visit to the country and reciprocated the visit to Malaysia by President Nazarbayev (left) himself in June 2006,” reads the letter.

“During the visit, the Prime Minister paid a courtesy call on President Nazarbayev and also held bilateral consultation with HE Karim Massimov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.

“The visit did not just elevate the bilateral relations between the two countries but had also generated many business opportunities for Malaysian business community. It may be worth highlighting that Kazakhstan is Malaysia's biggest trading partner among countries in Central Asia.

“The visit to Kazakhstan also coincided with the 7th World Islamic Economic Forum (7th WIEF) from 7 to 9 June 2011 in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. The Prime Minister's attendance at the 7th WIEF was in his capacity as head of government, representing Malaysia and as patron of WIEF.”

The department also noted that WIEF was an initiative started in 2005 by Malaysia which has evolved as one of the important platforms for dialogues and exchanges of cutting edge ideas, and business networking between governments and business leaders across the world.

“The decision for Kazakhstan to host the 7th WIEF on these dates was reached more than a year ago, when Malaysia hosted the sixth series of WIEF in May 2010,” the letter read further.

“On the whole, the visit had brought about a substantial development in Malaysia-Kazakhstan bilateral relations which is mutually rewarding.

“It has also reinforced the close relations between the two countries as well as promoted meaningful cooperation and dialogues among developing countries primarily members of the Organisation of the

Islamic Conference (OIC).

“As such, the claim by some quarters that the visit was for the wedding of the Prime Minister's daughter is totally unfounded,” said the department.

Yesterday, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar (above) came to Najib's defence and blasted Dzulkefly for what he described was the latter's "desperate" and "despicable" lies.

The Rembau MP also expressed hope that Najib sues all those parties that had claimed the premier had abused his office for an overseas trip to fulfill a personal agenda of sorts.

Dzulkefly said it is morally wrong for Najib to use public funds to travel to his daughter's wedding.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/166469>