

Kazakh trip: PM not setting good example

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The public is asking if the prime minister and his self-appointed 'first lady' have abused their positions vis-a-vis attending their child's wedding in Kazakstan while on an official business trip to the country.

Interestingly many have rushed to their rescue giving evasive and agitated explanations and even sneering at the very question that the rakyat are asking.

What makes it all a debacle is the way the rebuttals are forthcoming from the defenders of the PM and his First Lady.

The point of contention is very simple really. The logic is when you go to a foreign land on official business, the rakyat pay for the trip and expenses. It is approved because the government official is doing his/her job given by the rakyat.

You complete the assignment, come back and report on the success. And the rakyat will sing praises for you.

But when you go on official business and along the loop also attend a family function - in this case your child's wedding - and then return on an all expenses paid flight, it certainly raises ethical questions.

The right thing to do is that you go on official business at national expense, return, then apply for leave and go off to do your private thing and return when the leave expires. And that you do at your private expense and in your private and personal capacity as Mr Najib and Madam Rosmah.

In fact, if you place a separation between official duties and personal matters you would not even have the wedding fixed to coincide with your business calender. That is the way how it works for all rakyat who are employed or conduct their official businesses.

Business and personal matters do not mix!

But when you 'sambung sambung sambil buat kerja' (mix work with pleasure), ahh, that becomes an ethical issue. Got it?

To make matters worse, the entire entourage who also happened to be on the band wagon of official business trip to Kazakhstan and just happened to be also attending the wedding 'along the way' are also guilty of mixing duties with personal social obligations.

This is exactly the problem with Malaysian work culture. It permeates the entire government machinery and today even some private organisations are guilty of taking piggy-back rides on company/organisational expenditure and time.

They are guilty of flying to some destination for work related matters, extending their leave and continuing to enjoy a seemingly 'well earned' holiday and then return on a company paid return ticket.

To some Malaysians this is smart thinking. They do not realise how unethical they have been. They bat not an eyelid at this compromising of values.

And so BN will accuse the rakyat of making a fuss about a 'simple' matter.

But this is no simple matter. It involves the Number One of the nation. In fact if you study the nine challenges enshrined in Wawasan 2020, this 'tumpang' mindset and attitude runs foul of at least four of the nine challenges.

Then how on earth are we going to be a world class citizen and nation?

Should the PM and his First Lady not be setting the highest moral code of behaviour and exemplary ethical values so that the entire nation can emulate and transform its compromised values?

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