

PKR pits Wan Azizah against Rosmah
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PKR is to take advantage of the battered image of Rosmah Mansor, wife of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, in the election campaign by pitting party president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail against her as a role model for Malaysian women.

PKR Wanita chief Zuraida Kamaruddin launched this campaign today by releasing a series of pamphlets, each of six pages, chronicling the life and times of Wan Azizah.

"With this, we hope that Malaysians, especially women, can read and know more about Wan Azizah, that she is a normal woman who had to go through all kinds of trials and difficulties.

"Not like a woman who can spend RM24 million to buy a ring, shoes and clothes."

Wan Azizah, the spouse of Anwar Ibrahim, spearheaded PKR after her husband was sacked as deputy prime minister and jailed for corruption and sodomy in 1999.

Zuraida said the party has printed about 35,000 sets of pamphlets and would be distributing these nationwide, particularly in the rural areas where the people were dependent on the mainstream media that was favourable to Rosmah.

Plagued by negative foreign media coverage

Though enjoying positive coverage on local television, Rosmah has been plagued by numerous allegations of extravagant spending in cyberspace and the foreign media.

Most recently, Indonesian daily Kompas reported the alleged purchase of a US\$24 million ring by Rosmah, which has angered the Malaysian government leadership.

The article described Rosmah as having "a life full of controversies", and linked her to Perimekar, the company alleged to have received multi-million ringgit in commission for the Scorpene submarine procurement.

The daily has since apologised for the report.

In an interview with Malaysiakini early this month, Wan Azizah had said that her behaviour when she was wife of the deputy prime minister was totally unlike Rosmah's.

"God forbid I will be like Rosmah," she said.

The PKR move on the role model for Malaysian women marks the beginning of the second phase of the party's "Demi Rakyat" campaign, which has traditionally consisted of activities such as ceramah.

The campaign is an integrated effort by PKR to reach out to the people in anticipation of the 13th general election being called early.