

Rosmah spree: Blogger discloses email exchanges
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Fashion journalist Patty Huntington, on her blog Frockwriter, has disclosed email exchanges to attest to her report about Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's wife, Rosmah Mansor's expenses on exclusive designer label clothing in Sydney, Australia.

NONEFor the first time today, Huntington, in a lengthy write-up on her blog, annotated every detail on what transpired between her and designer Carl Kapp as well as his publicist, Little Hero, before the matter was picked up by The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) on Jan 21.

Huntington (right) said that she was pitched the story on Jan 16 by Little Hero's staff member Holly Beer, who sent an email to the blogger on Rosmah's purchase of 61 items from the Carl Kapp shop.

In Beer's emails to the blogger, she related Kapp's encounter with Najib and Rosmah at the the Darling Hotel penthouse, where Beer said that items ordered were "for her (Rosmah's) everyday occasions, which are many".

"The pieces need to be completed in a month from the second fitting. All pieces had to be altered to be with a long sleeve, with no bare ankles or wrists.

"A few of the styles she ordered included the Emilia skirt and long sleeve blouse below.

NONE"She (Rosmah) is already asking for more pieces in addition to the 61 ordered, which is a mix of AW12 (Autumn Winter 2012) and SS11 (Spring Summer 2011)," Beer had said.

Huntington also defended her earlier blog posting by disclosing the arrangement to fly Kapp to Kuala Lumpur this month just for the fitting, though the latter in his statement to Malaysiakini on Jan 25 denied it and said that the visit to Malaysia is part of his Asian tour, to source material for his designs.

"Kapp told me, she (Rosmah) asked me to come to KL for fittings.

"I (Kapp) said 'if you (Rosmah) take care of the travel arrangements, sure... I can't believe I'm actually flying over there next month for an hour and a half fitting.

"And then flying back out again the next day'," she revealed, citing excerpts of her conversation with Kapp on Jan 17.

Genuine effort to mislead the public

After the issue hit the local media last week, Kapp said the prime minister's wife and her entourage, including Islamic Fashion Festival (IFF) chairperson Raja Rezza Shah, had visited his shop and had made separate purchases.

Kapp was responding to queries following a report that estimated Rosmah could have spent up to A\$100,000 (RM323,000) at his store.

The orders were processed and Kapp was paid upfront, said Huntington, stressing that neither Beer nor Kapp had made any mention of IFF or the London boutique in their press statements.

NONEShe also cornered Little Hero, who claimed that the reports had given the impression that Kapp's establishment "is indiscreet, willing to divulge personal and private information about clients".

Huntington pointed out that none of the emails explicitly stated that the contents were off-the-record or

was there a privacy disclaimer at the end.

"I do not make a habit of publishing anyone's emails, but am willing to make an exception in this case as I feel there is a genuine effort here to mislead the public," she stressed.

She also beat down Kapp's bid to free himself of blame, saying that the latter and the publicist "volunteered, on the record - unsolicited - the unit size of the order. Sixty-one pieces. And apparently didn't think anyone would do the math".

"I write about fashion from a business perspective for a variety of publications... I am frequently required to include industry-sourced information and sales estimates in stories.

"The publicist in one email also provided the estimated cost of Kapp's designs with the most expensive being A\$2,970 for longer-styled dresses.

Carl Kapp Sydney designer "Overlooking for a moment the obvious facts that Rosmah did not order any short dresses, short-sleeved T-shirts or strapless boob tubes and that the entire order was made-to-measure, if the order was indeed 61 units, as claimed by Little Hero and Kapp, the absolute cheapest it could possibly have been was A\$17,995 (A\$295 x 61).

"And the absolute priciest: A\$181,170 (A\$2,970 x 61). Average it out and you don't get much change out of A\$100,000 - which is what I reported the order 'could be approaching'," said Huntington.

Passing the buck back to Kapp, she asked if the purpose was to be discreet, why mention the size of the order to Frockwriter and SMH.

"If (Little Hero director, Rae) Begley and Kapp had any concerns about the information in the story, it's curious that neither sought an immediate clarification. They did not.

"On the contrary, Kapp sent me an SMS at 18:35 that day (Jan 17) saying 'Thanks for the brilliant write-up!'," said Huntington.

Sydney Morning Herald journalist Andrew Hornery, who picked the story from Huntington, has stood by his report following Rosmah's denial on Jan 23 - two days after the news broke in Malaysia.

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