

Bare denials not good enough, Rafizi tells PM
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Prime Minister Najib Razak has been told either to confirm or deny the veracity of the document produced yesterday, which allegedly showed the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had underwritten his daughter's engagement party bill.

PKR strategies director Rafizi Ramli said that while the PMO had swiftly denied the allegation, it did not address the Banquet Event Order (BEO) from Shangri La Hotel which showed the booking and payment instructions were dealt with by the PM's office.

"PMO's demand for my instant apology is premature at this juncture as the two paragraphs statement consists of only mere denials without any hard evidence or facts that can support the denial.

"Nor did the PMO dispute the veracity of the BEO document produced against the prime minister," he said in a statement today.

Rafizi said if premier wants to clear his name, he has to:

- * Confirm or deny that the engagement party cost as much as specified in the BEO document;
- * Confirm or deny the veracity and authenticity of the document that the PMO had footed the bill;
- * Instruct the PMO to produce the original copy of the purchase order sent to Shangrila Hotel to ascertain which party was responsible for the order;
- * Instruct the PMO to produce a snapshot of the accounting transaction to ascertain if the order was recorded in the government's accounting system;
- * Instruct the PMO to produce the original invoice sent to Shangri La Hotel to determine if the whole expense was charged personally to Najib as claimed;
- * Instruct the PMO to produce the original snapshot of the accounting transaction from the government's accounting system which recorded the invoice sent by Shangri La Hotel, to ascertain whether the liability to pay the invoice was ever recorded;
- * Instruct the PMO to produce the original payment voucher made to Shangri La Hotel to ascertain the party which first settled the bill; and,
- * Produce his personal cheque used to pay, or his bank statements, or any third party records of his financial transactions as proof of payments to substantiate his claim that the bill was footed by him.

Rafizi, who is a chartered accountant by profession, said if all the evidence can be produced, only then will the rakyat be satisfied that public money was not involved in the payment for Najib's daughter's engagement party.

"Unless these eight questions and hard evidence are produced to the public, he will grapple with the public perception that despite his massive campaign to portray him as a clean and transparent prime minister, he is no different from his other colleagues in the cabinet who allegedly use the public fund for personal gains."

Yesterday, Rafizi claimed that, based on the BEO document, the PMO was billed RM409,767 for his daughter's engagement party on June 17 last year.

Najib's daughter Nooryana Najwa, 23, is engaged to Daniyar Nazarbayev, 23.

A trip to Astana, Kazakhstan last year for the pre-engagement ceremony courted controversy as opposition figures claimed that public funds were abused to pay for Najib's family trip.

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