

PKR: PMO billed RM80,000 for PM's birthday bash
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PKR has levelled a fresh claim that the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had been billed for Najib Abdul Razak's private affairs, this time involving RM79,053 for his birthday party.

At a press conference today, PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli furnished a banquet event order (BEO) from Shangri-La Hotel in Kuala Lumpur to the PMO.

According to the document, the dinner for 100 people was held on July 24 last year at the prime minister's official residence, Seri Perdana, in Putrajaya.

"At the event, 47 international dishes were laid out, including roast meat imported from New Zealand, Japanese delicacies and Western dishes," Rafizi told reporters at the Parliament lobby today.

The BEO states that RM21,495 was spent on food and beverages, RM31,800 on flower arrangements and RM13,038 on two live bands, while a RM12,720 handling charge was also imposed.

PKR had previously claimed that the PMO had footed the catering bill for Najib's daughter's engagement party on June 17 last year, amounting to RM409,767. However, the PMO denied this, while the hotel stated that Najib had paid the bill.

"It is not enough to issue a bare denial, because we need to see the trail of documents and the trail of bookings from the PMO," Rafizi commented today.

He noted that, unlike the engagement party, the birthday catering was explicitly recorded as a "private dinner hosted by the PM".

PMO: Rafizi got it all wrong

"This raises questions over why his daughter's engagement was not clearly stated as private but instead as a 'PMO event'.

"When the hotel sent out the accounts in the name of the payee - even if the prime minister says he had reimbursed the payee - the fact that it was booked by the PMO means that the ... first liability (lies with) the PMO," insisted Rafizi.

He demanded information on the source of the money and how Najib - whose salary is just above RM22,000 a month - could afford to pay for two high-end events within a month.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister's Office has again come to the defence of Najib, saying that Rafizi got it all wrong.

In a text message to Malaysiakini, the PMO said that claims that taxpayers' money was used for the event are "completely untrue".

"The amount said to have been spent is also incorrect and the bill was paid by the PM himself," it said.

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