

BBC plucks Najib's 'kangkung'

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As the nation struggles with a slew of price hikes, the prime minister, however, was miffed that he was not being thanked for the drop in kangkung prices.

Najib Abdul Razak's remarks about the economic status of vegetables during a recent speech drew widespread ridicule on the social media.

And now, even the BBC has picked up the story. Under its News Trending segment, the news agency reported how Najib was being lampooned over this issue.

"Food is a faux pas minefield for politicians, especially when it's perceived as being used in a get-down-with-the-people kind of way - think of British Prime Minister David Cameron's pasty moment or Chancellor George Osborne's 'posh burger' tweet. The almost inevitable response seems to be ridicule.

"That's where the Malaysian prime minister finds himself right now. With the government under fire because of price hikes in basics like fuel and electricity, he chose to push back by highlighting a reduction in the cost of the leafy green vegetable kangkung," read the report.

The report noted that there have been hundreds of thousands of tweets, a Facebook page set up, a YouTube re-mix of Najib's comments, the lyrics to popular and traditional folk songs have been re-worked, and 'Keep calm and eat kangkung' T-shirts have been made and rushed to markets.

"'Kangkung-gate', as it's been dubbed by some, has hit a nerve because many people are struggling with the rising cost of living, and are resentful of what they regard as corruption, and lavish spending by the government.

"Unsurprisingly, many opposition politicians - including Anwar Ibrahim - have seized on the opportunity to join in the collective fun-poking. The story has been so big on social media that many have complained of their timelines being clogged up," it added.

Apart from BBC, the matter was also reported in the Singapore Straits Times.

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