

Najib should consider cutting short vacation

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MP SPEAKS The Washington Post report of the Prime Minister Najib Razak teeing off in Hawaii with President Obama (who is on the fifth day of a two-week vacation) on Christmas Eve caused quite a jolt, not because he was holidaying in Oahu, Hawaii, but because Najib had tried to keep his trip abroad a secret from Malaysians.

This 'jolt' was compounded by Najib's absence at a time when the country was facing its worst floods since 1971, with over 91,000 people affected in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Perak, Perlis and beginning in Kedah, and with the flood situation expected to worsen and to hit Johor in a massive manner in the last few days of the year.

In response to mounting criticisms of Najib again being an absentee prime minister at a time when Malaysians are facing a natural disaster, the Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin responded with insufferable complacency saying: "I am in charge, don't worry. Have trust in me."

Malaysians have reasons to worry that Muhyiddin is up to task of handling the nation's worst floods since 1971, with his stubborn refusal to agree to the need to declare an emergency to focus all federal government resources to deal with the devastation caused by the floods.

Clearly, Najib did not have full confidence in Muhyiddin, evident from his latest blog when the prime minister said he had been in touch with his deputy and had asked him to step up assistance to flood victims.

But Najib's blog statement that, "We will do everything to help flood victims," is not convincing, when he is not prepared to cut short his vacations to rush back to the country to personally take charge of the federal government efforts in the worst floods in the country since 1971.

Najib's position is, "We will do everything to help flood victims, barring cutting short my vacation in Hawaii and rushing back to the country"!

Putrajaya on vacation?

Malaysians are entitled to ask why there seems to be no federal government in Putrajaya, why the PM is not only away in secret holiday in Hawaii, but not a single Umno minister visiting hardest-hit Kelantan to show the federal government's concern for the worst floods since 1971?

It is not that the federal government had been taken by surprise by the worst floods since 1971 as the authorities have warned those on the east coast to brace themselves for the worst floods in recent history as a result a powerful combination of king tides and strong

winds.

If communities in coastal areas and along river mouths had been warned to be ready themselves for immediate grab-and-go evacuations, where have all the Umno ministers disappeared to, in particular the minister in charge of national disasters?

Najib should not dilly-dally but declare an emergency because of the floods and cut short his Hawaii holiday to rush back to take charge of federal government operations to deal with the national disaster.

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