

'Gov't jet didn't stay in US for Najib's family'

MalaysiaKini.com

Jan 5, 2015

The government's VIP jet, which stayed behind in the United States for several days after Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak returned to Malaysia, was not meant for the use of Najib's family, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has explained.

"The aircraft had not stayed behind for used (sic) by PM's family members. Also, they are not in Indianapolis," the PMO said in a statement to veteran newsman A Kadir Jasin today.

The statement was published by Kadir in the comment section of his blog, as a follow-up to his posting titled, 'As the country floods, PM golfs in Hawaii'.

When contacted, Kadir (left) confirmed with Malaysiakini that the statement was issued by a senior aide of the prime minister after the veteran newsman queried about the matter.

In the statement, the PMO also confirmed that Najib's family had travelled in the government jet to Hawaii, where Najib played golf with US President Barack Obama on Christmas eve.

On Dec 26, 2014, Najib announced he would return to Malaysia after receiving flak for his holiday while the country faced the worst flooding in decades.

He arrived in Kota Baru the following day. The PMO said Najib had returned to Malaysia on a commercial flight.

"The prime minister came back on a commercial flight via Hong Kong where he was picked up (by) the Royal Malaysian Air Force and headed straight to Kota Baru," it said.

Najib admitted in Kota Baru that he had left his family which was on holiday to oversee the flood relief effort back home.

'VIP jet had technical issues'

This prompted speculation that the premier's family was still on holiday using the government jet.

However, the PMO said the aircraft had to stay back due to "technical issues".

"This arrangement came about as the aircraft which the PM and his family used to travel to Hawaii had to stay behind in the United States to sort out some technical issues," it said.

The PMO statement did not explain the nature of the technical issue or how Najib's family returned home.

Nor did it explain why the jet was tracked criss-crossing several countries before making it home yesterday.

As Najib made his way back, flight tracker portal FlightRadar24 showed the VIP jet with registration number 9M-NAA taking off from Honolulu, Hawaii to Los Angeles then Indianapolis.

It remained there for six days, until Dec 31, 2014.

After the long stop there, the aircraft took off for Los Angeles, followed by New York, London, Dubai and finally arriving in Bangkok on Jan 2.

The aircraft finally arrived in Kuala Lumpur International Airport at 10.20 last night before departing for Subang Airport 35 minutes later where it is usually based.

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