

Rafidah: Criticism of Najib at IACC an embarrassment

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The criticisms hurled against Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak at the International Anti-Corruption Conference are a national embarrassment, former minister Rafidah Aziz has said.

Malaysia's 'Iron Lady' said it only drives the people's message further on how corruption is plaguing the government.

"The embarrassment of having foreigners point out the wrongs (which we ourselves are pointing out to the leaders!) is certainly very painful... like adding salt and vinegar to the wound!

"Now we are the talk of the world community for very wrong and embarrassing reasons," Rafidah said in a Facebook posting today.

Najib (photo) has come under heavy fire at the conference in Putrajaya, which he skipped, with international corruption watchdogs demanding answers on the RM2.6 billion "donation" he received.

Similarly embarrassing, Rafidah added, was how the government has handled those investigating corruption.

"The world is now watching and waiting to see how such big issues are being handled.

"They will laugh when they see two or three officers being transferred here and there. That's not solving anything!" she said, referring to the aborted transfer of two senior MACC officers.

Rafidah, who is known for being uncompromising on certain issues, appeared flustered in her writing when commenting on governmental corruption in the country.

"Why? Why must things go so wrong? Why must money dictate leadership actions?

"Why must power and position be bought and assured through the buying of support?" she asked.

Accused of corruption herself

She said that it appeared the idea of serving the people and nation was no longer present.

The long-serving former International trade and industry minister is no stranger to corruption scandals.

In 2006, her former boss Dr Mahathir Mohamad accused her and her family members of corruption related to the issuance of Approved Permits (AP) for the import of foreign vehicles.

She defended herself of any wrongdoing in the court of public opinion and the government has since allowed the AP scheme to continue indefinitely towards bumiputera entrepreneur empowerment.

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