

Two more questions on RM2.6b Najib has to answer

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MP SPEAKS Thanks to the Malaysian government hosting the three-day 16th International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) in Putrajaya from Sept 2 to 4, where Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's RM2.6 billion "donation" has been transformed from a national scandal into a global one.

Henceforth, through the 1,000 delegates representing the foremost anti-graft fighters from 130 countries who attended the 16th IAAC, the world will be following closely the development of Najib's RM2.6 billion "donation" scandal – to determine whether it will be a classic case of the theme of the 16th IACC, "Ending Impunity: People. Integrity. Action" in the most negative sense!

This year of 2015 should be the best possible year for Malaysia in terms of international publicity, as Malaysia is the chair of Asean and a member of the UN Security Council, but it is shaping up to be Malaysia's worst and most horrible international year in the nation's history – really *annus horribilis* for Malaysia!

For three days, through the 16th IACC, Malaysia was not only lectured by Europeans, Australians and Americans, but also by Africans and South Americans, such as by countries like Peru, Cameroon and Russia, about the deplorable state of integrity and anti-corruption in Malaysia.

Now the whole world knows that the Malaysian prime minister could not answer simple questions, to the extent that he had to pull out from the official ceremony of the 16th IACC, which is probably the first time where the head of government of a host country had to run away from an international conference!

As the Transparency International chair Jose Ugaz said at the opening of the IACC, "there are two questions that need to be answered, who paid the money and why, and where did it go?"

Or, as the TI co-founder and former adviser to Najib and the Malaysian government on anti-corruption matters, Michael J Hershman, said on the second day, "Tell the truth about where did the money come from and address the accusation. And if he did something wrong, then asked for forgiveness and face the consequences."

And more pointedly, Hershman said: "If it came from the Middle East, who did it come from? When did it come and for what purpose? These are very simple questions."

Hershman said since Najib had control of the account, he must know where it came from, adding: "There is no reason for a panel for investigations. Just tell the truth. Get it out in the public."

RM2.6 billion is no puny sum

RM2.6 billion is not a puny sum. It is in fact 26 times more than what is permissible to be spent by all the 222 parliamentary candidates and 505 state assembly candidates of the Barisan Nasional in the 13th general election (GE13).

The maximum expenditure which is legally permissible for a parliamentary candidate is RM200,000 while the maximum legal expenditure for a state assembly candidate is RM100,000.

With 222 parliamentary candidates and 505 state assembly candidates, the maximum legal electoral expenditures for all the 222 parliamentary and 505 state assembly candidates of Umno/BN in the GE13 will come to RM44.4 million for all parliamentary candidates and RM50.5 million for all state assembly candidates or a grand total of RM94.9 million – not even reaching RM100 million!

The RM2.6 billion in Najib's personal accounts for GE13 expenses of the candidates is therefore more than 26 times the legally permissible limit to be spent by all the BN parliamentary and state assembly candidates in the election.

PM has to explain the great disparity

Najib will have to explain this great disparity if he believes in accountability, transparency, integrity and good governance.

Still, over and above the unanswered questions at the IACC conference, I still have two more questions for Najib on the RM2.6 billion “donation” scandal:

1. What are the total donations in his personal accounts for the GE13? I believe that it is most unlikely that the sum was just RM2.6 billion as exposed by The Wall Street Journal in its report of July 3, 2015. If so, Najib should reveal what were the total donations in his personal accounts for GE13 – whether they were just RM2.6 billion or many times more, and if so, the actual figures.

2. How many foreign donors were there and what was the total sum of donations from foreign sources for the GE13 campaign of Umno/BN? Does Najib agree that this is most questionable as it undermines the independence and sovereignty of Malaysia and that no political party should receive a single sen of foreign donation for general election purpose?

Najib should answer these two questions right away, as he ponders to tackle the additional questions on the RM2.6 billion “donation” scandal raised during the 16th IACC. He cannot keep running and trying to hide away from these probing questions.

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