

**Group lambasts Najib for wives 'start acting up' remark**  
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The Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) has criticised Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak for his remarks that leaders or elected representatives cannot perform well if their wives "start acting up".

JAG said ultimately, public officials should be responsible for their own actions as it is they and not their spouses who were elected into office.

"It is not up to an elected representative's wife to make sure her husband is 'well-liked by the people', nor should she have to bear the brunt of the repercussions felt from the irresponsible acts of the elected representative.

"Comments such as the ones made by Prime Minister Najib Razak only serve to perpetuate the patriarchal values in the field of politics in which women are very much seen as secondary or in a supporting role, and that women are always the cause of anything negative," it said in a press statement today.

Last Saturday, Najib was quoted by Bernama as saying that the wives of elected representatives played a big role in determining the success of leaders.

"If our wives start acting up, our heads are frayed and we cannot become good leaders or elected representatives," he was quoted as saying.

He added that wives of elected representative should take care of their husbands so that BN elected representatives can be well liked by the people.

He said elected representatives and leaders should likewise appreciate their wives' sacrifices.

**Women facing much discrimination**

JAG said Najib's statement should not be "tolerated" particularly in a field where women are already facing much discrimination and marginalisation.

"Comments such as these are just another form of scapegoating women, and serve to shift the blame of bad decisions made by elected representatives onto their wives.

"Women have many roles to play, including as elected representatives themselves, as well as wives and mothers," it said.

JAG is a coalition of eight NGOs including Sisters in Islam, All Women's Action Society, Empower, Tenaganita and Women's Aid Organisation.

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