

'Razak didn't simply allow wife with him on official flights'

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Former Prime Minister Abdul Razak Hussein is famous for being a frugal man when it came to government finances.

He was so frugal that he would not even let his wife Rahah Mohamad Noah share a flight with him when he went on certain official visits, a family friend revealed today.

"Rahah had wanted to follow Razak on a two-day visit to Kelantan.

"But Razak said 'No. I'm going by plane for an official visit, she will have to go on her own by car'," Kalsom Taib said at a seminar in Kuala Lumpur today commemorating the 40th anniversary of Razak's passing.

She added that Razak had also refused to put Rahah on the government's tab when she wanted to follow him to Myanmar.

Kalsom (photo) is the daughter of Taib Andak, who was among Razak's best friends.

Her husband Shafee Yahaya was also Razak's private secretary.

Her husband, she said, also related to her other matters in which Razak was frugal with his own wife.

"Shafee told me Rahah once wanted to change their residence's upholstery and curtains, but Razak said no," Kalsom said.

Razak and Rahah were married in 1952 when Rahah was just 18 years old.

Kalsom said the couple went on only three dates before their marriage, all under the watchful eye of Taib and his wife.

Razak's son Nazir, also present at the seminar, poked fun at this factoid, saying it would have made for a bad movie.

"If my parents' dating life was made into a Hollywood movie, it would be very short and boring," he said after Kalsom ended her speech.

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