

Anger about China visit not about who paid or gets invited

MalaysiaKini.com

Nov 2nd, 2016

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COMMENT After questions were raised about the presence of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's son Norashman Najib and step-son Riza Aziz in the premier's official delegation to China, the usual suspects came to the PM's defence.

Most loudly of these was of course the Prime Minister's Department employed aide to Najib's wife Rosmah Mansor.

In his defence of Najib allowing his children Norashman and Riza to tag along on an official state visit using a government jet paid for by taxpayer's money, Rizal Mansor said their presence was [requested](#) by the Chinese government.

He quoted an obscure Chinese proverb on how one must know of the source of the water before one drinks of it. He alleged that this is the common practice of Chinese officials to get to know the family of leaders they want to get close to.

It was also reported that the costs for the family members will be borne by the hosts, except for any extra spending.

But protocols aside, I think Rizal totally missed the point of the rakyat getting riled up over our prime minister and his family seemingly gallivanting around the world just soon after the government dropped the bomb shell of higher fuel and cooking oil prices on the populace.

It is off putting that your leader tells you to tighten your stomach and then fly off on what is essentially a working holiday, with his entire family to boot, in a jet we paid for with our tax, sweat and tears.

And yes, despite the artful defence of the rise in fuel price by a certain minister, claiming that Najib was responsible for saving us from another 5 sen increase in fuel price was made moot by the fact that he administered over the 15 sen increase.

Not quite so easy to play spin-the-bottle with such a subject matter, as it will always turn to point back at you.

But returning to the meat of the matter, the reason public ire was raised was not on whether or not that Najib's son and step-son were officially invited to be part of the entourage, but the fact they went with him so visibly on a government jet paid for with taxpayers' money.

It is anger at this that prompted the outcry and backlash.

Mahathir never had a private jet

Of course, someone also attached a picture of Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his family whilst on an official visit to China during his tenure as the prime minister. Others also added a picture of US President Barack Obama and his entire family on a similar state visit to China.

As if to mitigate Najib bringing his family along for the ride.

But at the time Mahathir never had a private jet, he always took an off-route MAS plane for transport, no specially made trimmings and he was not presiding over more subsidy cuts.

While as for Obama, he was not presiding over the largest banking scandal to have hit the world.

Indeed Najib would do well to remember the tale of why his own father the late Abdul Razak Hussein who never approved when his sons wanted a swimming pool at their official residence.

"What would the people say," was what Razak supposedly said to Najib himself over the matter, as the story goes.

Invited by Chinese government or not, common sense and good judgement and even perhaps guilt after dispensing policy which can only bring more hardship for the people, should have stopped him from bringing his entire family along for the official 'holiday' in China.

After all, as a cultured civilisation with thousands of years of history, the Chinese should also understand the need to set an example by leadership. I am sure that they would understand if he were to ask for an exception to the rule. Politics after all is all about perception.

"What would the people say," ... words for Najib to live by perhaps, unless he is no longer capable of bearing shame, even in his own father's name.

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