

## **COMMENT | Why there is no saving Rosmah**

**Malaysiakini**

**07 September 2022**

**June HL Wong**

COMMENT | Four years ago, we cheered when Rosmah Mansor was charged in court on Oct 4, 2018 for 17 counts of money-laundering and tax evasion related to the 1MDB scandal.

But as it turned out, she has been found guilty not for these charges but for soliciting RM187.5mil and receiving RM6.5mil in 2016 and 2017, in connection with Sarawak rural schools' solar power project.

We cheered again when former prime minister Najib Abdul Razak's conviction and sentence were upheld by the Federal Court on Aug 23, and Rosmah was convicted by the High Court on Sept 1.

They, however, will not go quietly into the slammer and they continue to play the "I am innocent, I was framed" card.

Playing the victim is a very Rosmah thing. Back in 2018, she claimed she was a

victim of fake news and cyberbullying.

If she thought by shedding tears and declaring in court she had never solicited any money and that “nobody saw me count the money” was believable, it shows just how out of touch with reality she is.

Yes, no one saw her counting the cash but we sure know how she spent money, which allegedly included over RM1 million on anti-ageing products, luxury goods and jewellery to feed her lavish lifestyle appetite.

Rosmah tried to downplay her extravagant ways, claiming some were presents from visiting dignitaries and adoring fans and supporters.

Remember how during a Goods and Services Tax (GST) briefing in February 2015, she tried to portray herself as an ordinary citizen by complaining about her hairdresser and tailor overcharging.

And Rosmah said, “For those who can afford it, it’s all right. But what about housewives like us with no income?”

That she has “no income” line was repeated by her lawyer Jagjit Singh, when he criticised her hefty fine of RM970 million.

Someone should have told him that excuse didn't work the first time either.

And that certainly was not how Rosmah presented herself in her 180-page glossy eponymous biography published in 2013 where she omitted certain aspects of her life like her first marriage, but made impressive claims that she was a "naturally gifted accountant" who had saved up to buy some of her bling and dresses.

She boasted in the biography that she could afford her luxuries from the millions earned from an album she recorded. It wasn't released to the public but was snapped up by government ministers who were her fans.

Well now, if Rosmah is so talented at handling money, then she would have no problem paying that RM970 million fine. Perhaps, she could sing her way out with another hit record?

What I also found laughable was her claim about making great contributions to the nation. The biggest feather in her cap is the Permata Pintar National Gifted Centre she founded in 2009.

It's hard to say how much of an impact the centre - renamed Pusat GENIUS@Pintar Negara by the Pakatan Harapan government - has on nurturing

gifted children because there is very limited information available.

Still, it provided Rosmah with a modicum of bragging rights.

In her court statement, she also laid claim to her clean leadership at Bakti (Welfare Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers) from which she did not take a dime and that she was the patron of the Badminton Association of Malaysia.

As far as I know, the prime minister's wife always chairs Bakti, beginning with third prime minister Hussein Onn's wife Suhailah Mohd Noah, who founded the association.

It was followed by Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and the late Endon Mahmood. Siti Hasmah and Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail both served as patrons of BAM and neither got booed by fans.

What else? Oh yes, this wasn't mentioned in court but Rosmah was the patron of Islamic Fashion Festival (IFF) whose mission was "to connect Islam with the Western world through fashion".

In hindsight, it was really a convenient and glamorous vehicle that took her to New York, London, Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan), Dubai and Milan.

Like Permata, it is not known how much benefit IFF brought to the Malaysian fashion industry.

### **Narcissistic**

So much for Rosmah's outstanding service to the nation. If she indeed earned millions from her album sales, did she donate any of it to charitable causes? We can only presume she didn't since there is not a squeak about it.

It's a pity that she didn't take a leaf from Imelda Marcos, another wife whose extravagant lifestyle ultimately helped topple her husband, former Philippine president, Ferdinand Marcos from power.

But for all Imelda's personal excesses, she actually made some lasting contributions to her country. She set up the international convention centre and the national culture, heart and lung centres.

Rosmah, who was granted a stay of execution, has another court date later this month to reclaim 2,436 pieces of jewellery and 29 luxury bags from the May

2018 police raids on her residences.

We can assume among them are a custom-made Hermes Birkin bag with an estimated value of RM1.6 million and a Chanel watch, which Najib admitted during his 1MDB trial that he paid RM466,000 for as Rosmah's birthday present in Hawaii, in 2014.

If she succeeds, maybe Rosmah can sell the goods to help pay the fine, if it's not quashed or reduced by the higher courts.

Even if that happens, like Najib, she has more charges, like the 17 counts of money-laundering and tax evasion related to the 1MDB scandal, to answer.

And if found guilty, there will be more jail time and fines. Stay tuned to courtroom drama, "The Najib and Rosmah Show", which will be a long-running series.

### **Wait for more drama**

Four years ago, Rosmah was already a hugely unpopular public figure who was greedy, manipulative and unpleasant that she seemed unreal, like an evil witch right out of a fairy tale.

Since then, she hasn't improved at all. From her well-documented actions and behaviour, I think there is a psychological complex that fits her to a T, narcissistic personality disorder.

Rosmah ticks off all the symptoms as listed by mayoclinic.org, as follows:

- An exaggerated sense of self-importance
- A sense of entitlement and require constant, excessive admiration
- Expect to be recognised as superior even without achievements that warrant it
- Exaggerate achievements and talents
- Preoccupied with fantasies about success, power, brilliance, beauty or the perfect mate
- Believe they are superior and can only associate with equally special people
- Expect special favours and unquestioning compliance with their

expectations

- Take advantage of others to get what they want
- Arrogant, conceited, boastful and pretentious behaviour
- Insist on having the best of everything — for instance, the best car or office

Experts say narcissism is often viewed as a permanent personality defect and impossible to change or cure because for that to happen, narcissists must take responsibility for their actions and have a sense of humility.

When her guilty verdict was announced, Rosmah beseeched the judge to “look at me as a woman with compassion, with some humanity”.

But there was no remorse, no regret, no admission of wrongdoing from her even with the overwhelming weight of evidence against her.

I had no sympathy or compassion for Rosmah in 2018 and none still in 2022.

**Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd**

Source: <https://www.malysiakini.com/columns/634862>