

Pasir Gudang MP: Opposition should defend PM after Saudi snub

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The opposition should defend Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim rather than attack him, said backbencher Hassan Karim, following a diplomatic snub by Saudi Arabia.

In a statement today, the Pasir Gudang MP said the opposition should not try to score political points on such matters because the prime minister represents all Malaysians.

"If Anwar was embarrassed by the Saudi royal family, all Malaysians should be angry towards King Salman and his crown prince Mohamad Salman," said Hassan.

Anwar visited Saudi Arabia recently on March 22 and departed on March 24. According to Wisma Putra, the visit was at the invitation of the Saudi crown prince.

"The prime minister is scheduled to have audiences with His Majesty King

Salman Abdulaziz Al Saud, custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Royal Highness Mohammed Salman Al Saud, crown prince and prime minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," read the press statement by Wisma Putra dated March 23.

However, such audiences were never granted. Anwar claimed that the Saudi government had requested he extends his trip to facilitate meetings with Saudi leaders but the Malaysian delegation had to decline due to obligations at home.

Following this, Machang MP and Bersatu politician Wan Ahmad Fayhsal Wan Ahmad Kamal described the matter as a diplomatic blunder, arguing that former prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin was treated differently and was received by the crown prince himself at the airport.

Wan Fayhsal also pointed out that Muhyiddin was allowed to enter the Kaabah - a privilege reserved for foreign dignitaries - while Anwar was not.

Hassan described the incident as a breach of diplomatic protocol by the Saudi government and should not be used by the opposition.

"Anyone who is trying to take advantage of the fiasco in Saudi Arabia and try to embarrass the prime minister should be embarrassed of themselves," said

Hassan.

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