

Discrepancies in Yen Yen's replies raise eyebrows
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Tourism Minister Ng Yen Yen's latest parliamentary written reply on her travel expenses is RM300,000 lower than what she had declared two weeks earlier.

Pointing out the discrepancy, Rasah MP Anthony Loke said Ng's (left) reply yesterday on her travel expenditure for January to October was RM1.28 million.

A similar reply to Pandan MP Ong Tee Keat on Oct 28 had stated that the cost was RM1.58 million.

"There is a RM300,000 difference... Is it because the minister is jet-lagged that she misread the figures?" he asked.

Ng has come under siege by opposition MPs demanding answers over her widely publicised trips abroad during the current sitting of the Dewan Rakyat.

Several MPs have been quizzing Ng on the details of her trips, particularly to New Zealand and Australia which had cost RM245,000.

Yesterday, Ng hand-delivered her written reply to Loke, accounting for all her trips to date this year. This revealed that she had attended six international forums and seven 'missions' across the globe.

Referring to a seven-day mission to Europe from May 25-31, Loke said he was baffled at the high cost of RM491,987.

He contrasted this with a similar trip to Europe covering four cities over 10 days which only cost about RM300,000.

"Is this a shopping trip or what?" Loke asked, adding that the figures was unjustified because most tourists coming to Malaysia do not originate from Europe.

According to Ng, the trip involved two delegations from the Tourism Ministry who visited London, Munich and Milan.

She said she had met officials of the Royal Horticultural Society to promote Malaysia's 'parks and gardens' product, while Tourism Malaysia officials participated in the annual Chelsea Flower Show.

Ng added that Tourism Malaysia won the gold medal in the 'Show Garden' category and that she was later interviewed by BBC.

Loke (left) also pointed out other variations between the figures given to him and to other MPs.

He zeroed in on another ministry mission to Arabian countries between May 4-12.

Ng's reply to him said this cost RM97,000, but her earlier reply Batu MP Tian Chua put the cost at about RM300,000.

Loke said he hopes the minister and her ministry will be more professional in performing their duties.

"We will read and compare our answers with the answers previously given, both to Pakatan MPs and BN parliamentarians, to make sure (the sums are) consistent," he warned.

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