

Tourism 'missions': Answers wanted, cover-up feared
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Opposition parliamentarians today reiterated their call for firm answers from Tourism Minister Ng Yen Yen on the actual cost of her tourism 'missions' and a report of the missions' effectiveness amidst fears of attempts to 'manipulate or 'massage' the figures to cover up questionable expenses.

NONE"Despite having revealed the discrepancies in several of her answers yesterday, there is still no answer from Ng or the tourism ministry.

"Why are they silent? They should explain the difference," said DAP youth chief Anthony Loke at a press conference in the parliament lobby today.

Loke (left) said that this is not a personal attack against Ng but an attempt to figure out the truth from the ministry.

Batu parliamentary Tian Chua, who was also present at the press conference, repeated his puzzlement over the figures given as answers to him, former transport minister Ong Tee Keat and Loke were significantly different from each other despite purportedly detailing the same expenses.

azlanAlso at the same event, Shah Alam parliamentary Khalid Samad expressed fear that the discrepancies could stem from attempts to hide or cover up certain figures.

"This may be an attempt to hide certain figures. It is inconceivable that the figures can change just like that.

"It may be an attempt to manipulate or massage the figures.

"Maybe they want to hide that there were ten officers on a trip instead of two?" he opined.

Khalid also questioned the ministry's blanket answer that the rise in tourist arrivals is proof positive that Ng's frequent overseas 'missions' were successful.

"More importantly are the effectiveness of the missions. If they are promoting Malaysia to tourist or our products, then there must be records on how effective it has been.

"How many tourists from the specific country visited us and how many products they bought? This they have to answer," he stressed.

Yesterday Loke and other MPs questioned Ng's differing replies to several parliamentary questions which raised eyebrows, but Ng and her ministry have remained silent on the discrepancy between the answers up to today.