

Tea with dad: Nurul amused by 'overblown' reactions
Malaysiakini.com
Jul 11, 2008

PKR MP Nurul Izzah Anwar is amused by the 'overblown' reactions to Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's decision not to meet with her father, Anwar Ibrahim.
MCPX

nurul izzah interview 220307 firmIn a statement today, she said by blowing this out of proportion, those who opposed the meeting have revealed that they are suffering from a "leadership crisis".

"The notion that by having tea with the Pakatan Rakyat leader, it can jeopardise Australia-Malaysia's cordial relationship which amounts to AUD\$3.2 billion (RM10 billion) a year in trade is simply quite amazing," she said.

On Monday, it was reported that Rudd will not meet Anwar during his maiden visit to Malaysia this week to avoid a possible diplomatic row.

The Australian newspaper stated that Rudd had opted to stand by existing Malaysian and Australian government protocols and not meet Anwar or Opposition Leader Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

kevin rudd and anwar ibrahimIt added that Rudd had considered meeting Anwar as part of the preparation for his trip but wanted to prevent a repeat of an incident from years before involving his predecessor John Howard.

In 1998, Howard had declared the corruption conviction of Anwar to be political and said Malaysia's judiciary had lost its independence, causing serious diplomatic rifts between the two countries.

'We'll be gracious hosts'

Foreign Minister Dr Rais Yatim also noted that the Australian leader's schedule was too packed with official and governmental matters, leaving no available time to meet Anwar.

He added that there would be other occasions for Rudd to meet the former deputy prime minister turned opposition leader in a personal capacity.

Nurul Izzah, who is Lembah Pantai MP, revealed that the meeting between the politicians was not solicited by PKR or her office but by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

She also said that Malaysia is not merely governed by one political party or person, and Rudd should be free to meet all political players in the country.

"We can see this clearly with the existence of five states being lead by Pakatan Rakyat amounting to 65 percent of the country's wealth.

"Hence, we are just as much a main stakeholder in charting the developmental progress of this country.'" she said.

Pakatan government will be gracious host

Nurul Izzah said that Pakatan would be a gracious host if Rudd or any world leaders would like to see Anwar or any Pakatan leader.

"We believe in engagement as more communication will lead to solving more problems and build bridges," she stated.

"However, we do understand the intricacies of public diplomacy and that Rudd has to give face to Abdullah but it is unfortunate for all.

"Nevertheless, come Sept 16, we will gladly accord them the proper decorum and if he wishes to pay a courtesy call to future opposition leader – Abdullah or deputy PM Najib Abdul Razak - we would be more than happy to assist," she cheekily added, referring to the possible change in government.

After meeting Abdullah yesterday, Rudd had hailed Malaysia as a "vibrant democracy" after the March elections saw the opposition win a third of parliamentary seats in an unprecedented result.

Nurul is expected to speak at a rally in Kampung Kerinchi near Bangsar tonight.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/85971>