

Foreign Ministry Refutes Claim That Najib's Kazakhstan Visit Was For Daughter's Wedding
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KUALA LUMPUR -- Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak's visit to Kazakhstan was to fulfil his acceptance of a long-standing invitation of Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev to visit the country, the Foreign Ministry said.

The ministry's Department of Information and Public Diplomacy in a statement to BERNAMA yesterday refuted Malaysiakini's June 7 report titled "PM's use of public funds for wedding trip morally wrong".

It said claims by some quarters that the visit was for the wedding of the Prime Minister's daughter was totally unfounded.

The statement clarified that Najib's visit to Kazakhstan on June 5 and 6 was also the Prime Minister's first official visit to the country and reciprocated the visit by Nazarbayev to Malaysia in June 2006.

It said during the visit, Najib had paid a courtesy call on Nazarbayev and also held bilateral consultations with Kazakhstan Prime Minister Karim Massimov.

"The visit did not just elevate the bilateral relations between the two countries but had also generated many business opportunities for Malaysian business community," it said.

It added that Kazakhstan was also Malaysia's biggest trading partner among countries in Central Asia.

The statement also said that the Prime Minister's visit coincided with the 7th World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) from June 7 to 9 at Astana (Kazakhstan's capital), and that Najib had attended the forum in his capacity as a head of government, representing Malaysia and as patron of WIEF.

The decision by Kazakhstan to host the 7th WIEF on these dates was reached more than a year ago, when Malaysia hosted the sixth series of the WIEF in May, 2010, the statement said.

"On the whole, the visit brought about a substantial development in Malaysia-Kazakhstan bilateral relations which is mutually rewarding.

"It has also reinforced the close relations between the two countries as well as promoted meaningful cooperation and dialogues among developing countries, primarily members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC)," it added.

(Bernama)

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