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Query over Najib's travel cost

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A **q**UESTION was raised yesterday over the transparency in the answers provided by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak with regard to the amount he spent Aying overseas.

Anthony Loke Siew Fook (DAP-Seremban) had twice, in his oral question, asked about the details and expenditure of the VIP Airbus A319CJ which transported Najib overseas last year.

However, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim replied that "the cost borne was based on the eligibility limits of the prime minister".

Noting that the limit is akin to a "blank cheque", Loke said there is no transparency and accountability in the prime minister's spending.

"It is as if Najib can spend without any limit and he cannot be questioned by any MP. And

this is not acceptable," he said, adding that there is no explanation given on the limit a prime minister can spend.

Speaking at a press conference in Parliament, Loke also questioned if Najib's family vacation is considered as official business as a prime minister.

"Is his family allowed to use any government facilities, including the government-exclusive airplane, and is the cost borne by the taxpayers?" he asked.

He also pointed out that last year, the Prime Minister's Department had disclosed the cost of Najib's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor's travel to Qatar in 2013 cost RM426489, and estimated that the cost of Najib's trip to the US in December last year would be about RMi millioiL

"Any wastage of taxpayers' money should be stopped," he added. - By **Bernard Cheah**