

**PM's Kazakhstan trip cost RM1m**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 11 — The government spent RM1.1 million on the prime minister's official visit to Kazakhstan in June, a trip the opposition said coincided with the engagement of Datuk Seri Najib Razak's daughter.

The foreign ministry said in a reply to a parliamentary question that Najib was in the Central Asian state from June 5 to 6 at the invitation of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Najib then led a delegation to the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) held in its capital Astana from June 7 to 9, the ministry said in reply to Batu MP Chua Tian Chang's question posed last week.

The opposition had accused the prime minister of abusing public funds to attend his daughter's engagement ceremony.

PAS research chief Dzulkefly Ahmad had demanded that the government reveal "how much of it was for personal matters and whether anyone in the entourage was not necessary for the WIEF."

Najib's daughter Nooryana Najwa was betrothed to Daniyar Nazarbayev, whose mother is the ex-wife of Nursultan's brother, on June 17 in a ceremony held at the PM's residence in Putrajaya.

In August, Najib denied that his Kazakhstan in-laws are linked to the "Russian mafia" as was reported by Indonesia's top-selling daily, Kompas, earlier that month.

Kompas has since apologised to the prime minister for its August 4 report in which it described Daniyar's mother Maira as living "a lifestyle ala Imelda Marcos and supposedly has links to the Russian mafia."

However, the newspaper provided no evidence to back its claim.

The foreign ministry also said that a trip to Turkmenistan the following month was also at the invitation of its president and cost RM323,268.

Wisma Putra said that both trips saw several trade agreements being signed.

However, it said that the PM's trip to Perth from August 31 to September 3 was a private trip made at his own expense.

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