

NGO wants hotel to break silence over engagement dinner

The Malaysian Insider

March 12 , 2012

By Yow Hong Chieh

.

SHAH ALAM, March 12 — Shangri-La Hotel must clarify if the banquet event order it allegedly issued for the prime minister's daughter's engagement dinner in June last year is genuine, Jingga 13 said today.

The PKR-linked NGO said the hotel has so far not responded to the claims made by PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli last Friday and urged its management to do so.

"There's been nothing from Shangri-La until today," Jingga 13 coordinator Fariz Musa told reporters outside the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office here.

"They must make a statement on this because the document is from Shangri-La Hotel."

Jingga 13 had earlier lodged a report with the MACC over the alleged use of public funds by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to pay for the engagement dinner.

Fariz said Jingga 13 will go to Shangri-La Hotel tomorrow at 12.30pm to enquire about the banquet event order.

He added that Najib must prove that he used his own money to pay for the event, as stated by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

"If it's true that the engagement dinner was paid for by the prime minister and his family... we want to know where he got this money from," he said.

"And if it was sponsored by other parties, we want to know which party would be willing to pay nearly half a million ringgit for the engagement dinner."

On Friday, Rafizi alleged that the prime minister had spent RM409,767 of public funds on June 17, 2011 to celebrate his daughter's engagement to Kazakhstani Daniyar Nazarbayev.

As proof of his claim, he distributed to reporters copies of a purported banquet event order issued by Shangri-La Hotel to the PMO, addressed to Najib's private secretary, Datuk Mohd Po'ad Jelani.

The order comprised a bill of RM18,792 for 36 VIPs — who were served marinated scallops and Wagyu beef — RM309,975 for 862 guests and RM81,000 for handling costs.

The PMO has denied the claims, stating: "No public funds were used to meet the costs of his daughter's engagement reception, which was paid for personally by the prime minister and his family."

But Rafizi replied that Najib must instruct his office to produce the original copy of the purchase order and invoice sent to and from Shangri-La Hotel to determine who had made the order.

He also said that the PMO must provide a snapshot of the government's accounts to show if the transaction was ever recorded.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/ngo-wants-hotel-to-break-silence-over-engagement-dinner/>