

Shangri-La confirms Najib paid for engagement dinner
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 — Shangri-La confirmed today Datuk Seri Najib Razak paid for his daughter's engagement dinner despite PKR producing a banquet event order (BEO) charging the RM409,767 dinner to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The hotel management told The Malaysian Insider in an email statement that it received a confirmation on June 2, 2011 for event catering at the PM's official residence Seri Perdana 15 days later.

"As per normal procedure, event order number 14511 was issued on June 13, 2011 for the said event. The said event was completed on June 17, 2011 and the full settlement of the said event was paid by the Honourable Prime Minister (picture) on June 30, 2011 and not by the Prime Minister's Office," it said.

PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli showed reporters on Friday the BEO as proof of his claim that the prime minister spent RM409,767 on the June 17, 2011 event to celebrate his daughter's engagement to Daniyar Nazarbayev from Kazakhstan.

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

But the PMO denied the same evening footing the bill for the event.

"The engagement bill of PM's daughter, Nooryana Najwa, was not taken up by the Prime Minister's Office as alleged by some quarters. PKR's strategic director Rafizi Ramli should apologise for his allegations, which are false, defamatory and a deliberate smear on the Prime Minister's reputation.

"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," it said in a statement.

But PKR demanded the next day Datuk Seri Najib Razak provide evidence that public funds were not used to pay the RM409,767 bill.

Rafizi said in a statement that the demand for an apology by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) "is premature at this junction as the two-paragraph statement consists of only a mere denial, without any hard evidence or facts that can support the denial."