

## **Journalists should dress properly**

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**By Audrey Dermawan**

A RECENT search on the Internet on the dress code for journalists led me to the answer "Not a written one".

However, it went on to say that journalists should always dress nicely.

No jeans or T-shirts -- some sort of suit or at least a collared shirt, a tie, and slacks for men; skirt or nice pants and dress shirt for women. Women should also dress modestly - no miniskirts or low-cut tops.

It is not my business to comment on what journalists should or should not wear but I agree that they should always dress nicely, i.e. according to the kind of news that they are covering.

I am not saying that I do not wear jeans to work but it depends on the kind of function I am covering and the person I am meeting.

What we wear say a lot, not only about ourselves, but the company we are working for, in general.

We want people to not only have good impressions of us, but the company we are working for as well.

I attended a royal dinner in Ipoh recently where the guest-of-honour was the Queen, the Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah.

Also in attendance were the Raja Permaisuri of Perak Tuanku Bainun and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Some journalists came in their jeans and T-shirts. Yes! You read me correctly.

It was no surprise at all because I have seen journalists dressed in this manner when I was working in Penang for more than 10 years.

I always asked myself whether they had any respect for the VVIPs in attendance. Is it so difficult to dress properly? We are talking about the Queen here. Shouldn't the Queen be accorded the necessary respect?

According to the royal.gov.uk webpage, journalists covering royal engagements, whether in Britain or abroad, should comply with the dress code on formal occasions out of respect for the guests of the Queen, or other members of the royal family.

Smart attire for men includes the wearing of a jacket and tie, and for women a trouser or skirt suit.

Those wearing jeans or trainers will not be admitted and casually dressed members of the media will be turned away. This also applies to technicians.

It is normal to see journalists wearing three-quarter tights and T-shirts as well as three-quarter pants to cover the weekly state executive council meeting, chaired by the menteri besar.

A friend remarked to me that she only wore such tights for swimming, while three-

quarter pants were for shopping.

A menteri besar is the chief executive of a state government for states in Malaysia with hereditary rulers.

Is this the kind of attire journalists should be wearing to cover the menteri besar?

As journalists, we do not appreciate hard-and-fast rules but we should have the sense to dress appropriately for such events.

Surely, we do not want to end up like Zambia where the country's Information, Broadcasting and Labour Permanent Secretary Amos Malupenga warned journalists that they risked being barred from covering functions at the state house and other state functions if they continued with their "improper" dressing.

Malupenga was shocked to see journalists from private media houses dressed in dirty jeans with shirts not tucked in when they covered President Michael Sata at the state house.

I agree with Malupenga on this matter.

The keyword here is respect and the figures I mentioned above, certainly deserve respect.

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