

Malay NGOs slam Najib's brother for backing AirAsia X CEO
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KUALA LUMPUR, June 11 – Malay-Muslim groups attacked CIMB Group chief executive Datuk Seri Nazir Razak today for defending AirAsia X leader Azran Osman Rani, labelling him a Malay who has forgotten his roots.

Nazir (picture) praised the captain of the long-haul budget airline yesterday for making a stand against Umno-owned Malay newspaper Utusan Malaysia's purported racial instigation after the May 5 general polls, with the younger brother of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak saying it showed the "mark of a leader".

"Nazir and Azran are the two best examples of Malays who fit the proverb, 'Seperti kacang lupukan kulit'," said the Malay-Muslim NGO Coalition in a statement today.

"Hello Nazir and Azran, remember your roots and don't ever be proud or arrogant because of your money, status and wealth. What you two possess are the fruit of the hard labour of your Malay ancestors, who sacrificed their life, soul and spirit to defend this blessed land," it added.

Utusan Malaysia attacked Azran for most of last month after the airline executive criticised the right-wing broadsheet on his Twitter account, @azranosmanrani, for what he reportedly saw as racial instigation in the aftermath of the divisive 13th general election.

He was also reported to have criticised Malay group Perkasa for its hardline stance as an irrelevant organisation that had caused Malays to be myopic.

In response, the paper published daily views from Perkasa leaders, the Muslim Consumers Society of Malaysia and pro-Umno activists who censured Azran, branding him "arrogant" and a Malay who had forgotten his roots.

AirAsia X chairman Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz and director Datuk Seri Kalimullah Hassan had also come under attack from various groups after the duo had defended Azran's comments.

Malay rights group Perkasa, the Ex-Servicemen Association of Malaysia, Malaysian Reformists Movement and the Malaysian Malay Network were among the groups that lashed out at both Rafidah and Kalimullah and demanded the duo apologise for their remarks against Utusan, which they say is the voice of the Malays.

The Malay-Muslim NGO coalition also said today that not many Malays were as fortunate as Nazir, who was born in an upper middle-class family with his older brother Najib and late father, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, as prime ministers, besides having a cousin, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, as Defence Minister.

"Nazir, in his ivory tower, of course would never have experienced the bitterness and difficulties that impoverished Malays face," it said.

"Azran, on the other hand, is a nephew to an... opposition leader who is known for splitting the country, destroying political stability and threatening national security by organising a series of illegal rallies across the country, just because he is disappointed for failing to

achieve his ambitions of reaching Putrajaya," added the coalition, referring to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

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