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Razali Ismail appointed UN special envoy to Myanmar

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Malaysia's former Permanent Representative to the United Nations Tan Sri Razali Ismail has been appointed UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's special envoy to Myanmar.

Confirming this today, Razali said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had given him the greenlight to take up the job.

"My mission to Myanmar is to try to defuse the areas of conflict between the Myanmar Government and supporters of (opposition leader) Aung San Suu Kyi," Razali said.

"I am happy to take up this mission as it is the hope of the UN Secretary-General that there be a dialogue between the Myanmar authorities and Suu Kyi and her supporters," he said.

Razali's appointment came in the wake of a new stand-off in Myanmar between the military-led government and Suu Kyi, who today staged a roadside confrontation for the second day after being blocked yet again from meeting her provincial supporters.

Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy, was prevented from meeting her supporters outside the Myanmar capital last month and had to spend six days in a car before officials forced her to return home.

Reports from Yangon said it was her fourth failed attempt to travel to meet her provincial supporters in little over a month.

The UN in a recent statement on Myanmar urged the government to work with Suu Kyi to resolve the current stand-off peacefully and quickly.

Razali retired as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the UN in March this year after eight years during which he also served for a year as President of the UN General Assembly.

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