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Soros comes under fire for seeking ouster of Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malaysians today took to task currency trader George Soros who called for the ouster of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, describing it as another attempt to interfere in the country's internal affairs.

They said the statement, coming on the heels of US Vice-President Al Gore's remarks in support of the reformasi movement, was tantamount to trying to destroy a democratically-elected Government.

In Klang, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Soros was reacting to Malaysia's initiative to insulate the economy from the pressures of speculation of the ringgit.

"If this measure introduced by Dr Mahathir succeeds, then people like Soros who participates in currency speculation would be badly affected, especially when other countries affected by the economic downturn emulate it."

The best way for Soros to destroy the measure which was succeeding, was to attack its source, Najib said when speaking to reporters after attending a gathering of community leaders and educators in Klang and Kapar at Dewan Hamzah here today.

Najib, who is also Education Minister, urged Malaysians to strongly reject Soros' call to oust Dr Mahathir, and to close ranks and support the Barisan Nasional leadership.

In Kuala Lumpur, Works Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said Soros was trying to destroy Malaysia politically.

"Soros' statement clearly indicates a long-term plan of his and his parasites to destroy the democratically-elected Government of this country."

Samy Vellu said Soros had already destroyed many economies in the developing world and was now turning his attention to bring down Governments.

It was reported today that Soros, in a speech at a US university on Thursday, had called for Dr Mahathir's ouster and the release of former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who is on trial for corrupt practices and alleged sodomy.

"I hope that Anwar will be either let out of jail or if he's put in jail, the public opinion is going to turn against Mahathir," Soros said, when asked by a reporter who should replace Dr Mahathir.

"Soros has completely deviated from the principles of non-interference of a citizen of one country in another," Samy Vellu said.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said Soros should mind his own business and not meddle in Malaysia's affairs.

"I think this is another example of absolute arrogance. We are a democratic country and the people had overwhelmingly voted in Dr Mahathir."

"To Dr Mahathir, I must reiterate that all Malaysians are fully behind him. To Soros, please learn to mind your own business," said Dr Ling who is Transport Minister.

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