

**Grow a spine, Anwar tells alma mater UM**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**Oct 26, 2014**

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim has lambasted his alma mater Universiti Malaya for issuing a show-cause letter to the student council president for inviting Anwar to speak on campus tomorrow.

He said that UM's vice-chancellor for student affairs Rohana Yusuf is infringing on the rights of all students as student council president Fahmi Zainol was democratically elected by the student body.

"Universiti Malaya must support academic freedom and the deputy VC must stop talking like an Umno branch leader and start showing some intellectual back bone.

"To suggest that the event would 'damage the image' of the university defies logic.

"On the contrary, such an event would help to enhance its image as an institution that fosters vibrant discourse on socio-economic and political developments," Anwar said in a statement.

He also lauded Fahmi (right) for his "courage" and urged those in power to stop intimidating members of academia critical of the government.

Fahmi was issued a show-cause letter for organising the talk 'Anwar Ibrahim: 40 years from UM to prison', which will take place at Dataran Dewan Tunku Canselor on campus tomorrow.

The student council said event, which falls on the eve of Anwar's final appeal against his sodomy conviction, will UM's insistence that it is not permitted.

The council argues that the students have the right to keep abreast with current developments, especially in a landmark case involving a UM alumnus.

University ranking

Agreeing, Anwar (below) said that this is a "crucial aspect" of academic and intellectual development and students should not insulated from current affairs, including political repression.

"Rather than trampling on the fundamental rights of the students in exercising their freedom of association and expression, the university authorities should instead focus its attention on how best to improve the university's international ranking," he said.

Speaking to Malaysiakini, Rohana said that as far as the university is concerned, the event will not take place tonight as it was never approved.

She also denied claims that she issued a notice to students threatening disciplinary action if they participate.

The vice-chancellor also said that claims that police will take over campus security tomorrow is not true.

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Source <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/278664>