

Law minister flip flops on Yong's execution case

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Malaysia appears to have flip-flopped on their purported plan to meet with the lawyer of Yong Vui Kong, a young Malaysian on death row in Singapore who is making a second plea of clemency to the republic.

NONEDe facto Law Minister Nazri Aziz (right) had earlier agreed to meet with Singaporean lawyer M Ravi, who is in Kuala Lumpur to speak at the launch of the book 'A Jolly Hangman' at the Selangor Chinese Town Hall today.

In a sudden turn of events, Ravi said he received a telephone call from the Malaysian High Commissioner's office yesterday saying that the government was no longer interested in meeting him.

Rohani Hussain, second secretary at the Singapore Malaysian High Commission, made the call, offering no explanation for the abrupt change of heart.

Rohani had on June 19 visited Yong in Changi prison, paving the way for a meeting with the Malaysian government.

"What a stark development. They are not even interested in finding out about the concerns I have raised," said Ravi.

"Looks like they are not even going to appeal to the Singaporean government on Yong's behalf," added the lawyer, who is representing the 22-year-old Malaysian on a pro-bono basis.

Nazri, who is minister in the Prime Minister's department, had earlier remarked that Malaysia will not intervene in Singapore legal process as the case had happened across the causeway, but had later agreed to hear Ravi out.

The meeting's location was Nazri's office.

Vow to continue fighting

Nevertheless, Ravi said he will continue the battle in the Singapore courts, based on his claim that the republic's Law Minister K Shanmugam's remarks influenced Singapore President SR Nathan into rejecting the clemency appeal in December.

The remarks, Ravi argues, makes the decision process "flawed and illegal".

NONE"I will still appeal to the UN rapporteur who had intervened earlier by appealing the Singaporean government not to proceed on two (previous) unlawful executions," said Ravi (left).

"Any injustice to one is a concern to all regardless of nationality and race," he added, saying he will also approach the European Union Human Rights Commission for assistance.

Undeterred by the Malaysian government's sudden about turn, Ravi will still explore with Malaysian lawyers ways to file an application in court for a mandatory injunction to compel the Malaysian government to file a complaint against Singapore in the International Court of

Justice (ICJ).

Yong was only 19 when he was caught trafficking 47g of heroin into the island in 2007. His scheduled execution in December last year was postponed when Ravi filed for a stay pending his appeal.

The Malaysian High Commissioner's office in Singapore is not available for comment.

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