

S'pore envoy summoned over WikiLeaks remarks  
Malaysiakini.com  
Disember 14, 2010

Miffed with "uncalled" for and less than flattering statements by the island-nation's senior officials about Malaysia, Wisma Putra today summoned the Singapore High Commissioner to register Malaysia's protest over the matter.

NONE"I summoned him this morning, and handed over the letter of protest and also (to) explain our concern and displeasure towards what has been leaked in WikiLeaks," said Foreign Minister Anifah Aman (left) at a press conference in Parliament lobby.

The minister clarified that he did not expect any apology from Singapore, but the protest note was symbolic of Malaysia displeasure with its island neighbour.

"I don't expect a response or anything, as far as Malaysia is concerned, we have lodged our displeasure," he said.

Anifah lamented that the snide comments about Malaysia came from Singaporean diplomatic officials at a time when the relationship between the two countries is at an all time high, as reflected in the special understanding between Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his counterpart Lee Hsien Loong.

"These statements that came out does not benefit both countries and I think it causes embarrassment to the leaders of Singapore."

"If my officers from (the) Ministry of Foreign Affairs said something about Singapore leaders, I would be very embarrassed and angry because, like I said, it does not do any good to the bilateral relationship. It will just muddy the waters," he added.

However, Anifah took solace that the demeaning statements was only issued by officials, and not the republic's leaders.

"But then again, I said, they must also take into consideration the feelings of their neighbours.

"While it is their prerogative to say (what they want), they must take into consideration (their) bilateral relationship with their closest neighbours," said the foreign minister.

Less than flattering remarks

Anifah's actions come on the heels of a storm raised by the emergence of a report in an Australian newspaper on leaked diplomatic cables originating in 2008-2009, that have implicated both sides of the political divide in Malaysia.

In an exclusive report by Australian daily Sun-Herald on the cables, Singaporean officials were quoted as having uttered less than flattering remarks about Malaysian leaders to Australian officials.

In one cable, Malaysia was described as being on a "dangerous" decline fuelled by "incompetent politicians".

The cable was one of a number of cables sent between 2008 and 2009 that detailed meetings held between senior US officials and senior Singaporean Foreign Affairs chiefs Peter Ho, Bilahari Kausikan and Tommy Koh.

The trio gave US officials damning assessments of Malaysia, said The Sun-Herald.

abdullah ahmad badawi 020209 02According to a cable detailing a meeting in September 2008, the newspaper said Kausikan told US Deputy Secretary of Defence for East Asia David Sedney that there was a "distinct possibility of racial conflict" which could see ethnic Chinese "flee" Malaysia and "overwhelm" Singapore.

Ho's assessment of Malaysia in March that year, given to another US official, was also said to have been unflattering and included claims that former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad had been 'throwing stones' at his replacement, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (left).

Asked about one cable in which former Singapore premier Lee Kuan Yew insinuated that Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim is indeed guilty of the deed he was allegedly trapped into performing, Anifah said: "It is up to him (Anwar) to defend himself."

"This is nothing to do with Malaysia. It comes from their former leader and who knows which intelligence he based it on. I don't think Singapore would want to make this kind of statement," he said.

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