

Government demands US stop 'interfering'
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Foreign Minister Rais Yatim today demanded the United States stop "interfering" in an investigation into sodomy allegations against opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim.
MCPX

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice Thursday urged Malaysia to ensure a "transparent" investigation into the sexual misconduct allegations against Anwar - the same charge that saw him jailed a decade ago.

suhakam religion culture conference 090906 rais yatim speak "Whatever others say from outside Malaysia is irrelevant. Ultimately it is the decision of Malaysians that will be counted in this case," Rais Yatim told AFP.

"Anwar may have many friends overseas to prop him up for his image and for his present situation but Malaysia has its own laws and domestic constitution," he said.

"The US has got this larger-than-life image in assuming the position as policemen of the world. They want to project this all along but they have to stop interfering and making comments such as these," the minister said.

"After a certain point, if they keep interfering with the internal affairs of other countries, then the US has got to answer to the big question of responsibility and whether they have the jurisdiction to do that, as powerful as they may be," he said.

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi also got stuck into the US.

"I want to make this important point: We are a sovereign country and we have our own set of laws. Whatever we do we will make sure it is consistent with the laws and spirit of the laws in Malaysia and I hope people will respect it," he told reporters.

Rice: US will continue to speak out

Malaysia has accused the US of meddling in its internal affairs by raising concerns over Anwar's arrest last week.

Condoleezza Rice 180305Rice however said the US would continue to speak out on cases involving human rights and politics although it did so "in a spirit of respect for Malaysia".

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Three former world leaders - former Canadian prime minister Paul Martin, ex-World Bank chief James Wolfensohn, and Michel Camdessus, the former head of the International

Monetary Fund - also urged the sodomy allegations be dropped.

They also reiterated their "full confidence," in Anwar's moral integrity.

Anwar spent a night in custody last week after being arrested over accusations that he sodomised a 23-year-old male aide. He was released on bail and must report back to police on August 18.

The allegations threaten to derail Anwar's spectacular political comeback, after March elections that handed the opposition a third of parliamentary seats.

He has said he plans to seize power soon with the help of government defectors.

Anwar was sacked as deputy premier in 1998 and jailed for six years on corruption and sodomy charges.

The sex conviction was overturned by the nation's highest court in 2004.

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