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# Lawyer: Najib may sue if WSJ waives SPEECH Act

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak will only take legal action against the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) if it gives an undertaking not to invoke the SPEECH Act in relation to its report about the Prime Minister.

The Securing the Protection of our Enduring and Established Constitutional Heritage (SPEECH) Act is a federal statutory law in the United States that makes foreign libel judgments unenforceable in the US courts.

Yesterday, Najib's lawyer Datuk Mohd Hafarizam Harun said he had written a letter in mid-September to WSJ's Singapore-based senior counsel Philip Jeyaretnam to inquire about the matter.

"It is an act of Congress that protects US companies, particularly a media company. It gives protection from executing a defamation judgment of a foreign jurisdiction. I do not want to file a case and then it becomes a paper judgment.

"Isn't it a futile exercise? Why do you let a foreign judiciary to dictate that your court is not independent?" he said.

Mohd Hafarizam said he might advise the Prime Minister to sue WSJ if it undertook not to invoke the Act.

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Datuk Mohd Hafarizam Harun

He said the deadline given to the counsel to respond was until yesterday.

WSJ had published an article quoting an unnamed investigator, claiming that almost US\$700mil had been channelled into Najib's personal accounts.

On July 8, Najib's lawyers sent a letter of clarification to WSJ seeking an explanation over its July 3 article.

The Prime Minister's Office responded by saying that the article was political sabotage while 1MDB, which had been implicated in the matter, insisted that no funds had been transferred into Najib's accounts.