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## 'US Speech Act prevents Najib from suing WSJ'

BY KESHIA MAHMOOD *The Sun*  
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**PETALING JAYA:** The United States Speech Act makes it difficult for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak to file a defamation suit against *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ), claimed a special officer at the Prime Minister's Office.

According to the special officer, Yuktes Vijay, the Act provides protection against foreign libel judgements and this is why the matter cannot be pursued further.

In a Facebook post yesterday, Yuktes said the reason former Singaporean prime minister Lee Kuan Yew was able to sue WSJ in 2008 was not because the daily has an office in Singapore, but that the Speech Act was only enacted two years later in 2010.

"Kuan Yew filed a suit in 2008 before the Speech Act was introduced. At the time, where was immunity provided by the Speech Act?"

"Is it Najib's fault that the WSJ defamation case occurred after the Speech Act was passed?" he wrote.

However, lawyer Azhar Harun refuted Yuktes's claims, clarifying that the Act does not protect WSJ from being sued.

He said the Act does not enable a Malaysian court judgment to be enforced in the US.

"That means if a defamed person sues WSJ in (Malaysia), that person may win the suit if he or she could prove the case.

"However, the Speech Act does not enable that person to go to (US) to seek to enforce the (Malaysian) defamation judgement that he or she obtains in (Malaysia)," he said, also in a post on his Facebook.

Azhar said any monetary compensation awarded by a Malaysian court cannot be obtained in the US.

"But as a prime minister, may I ask, would Najib be more concerned with obtaining monetary compensation or with protecting his reputation ...," he questioned.

"Wouldn't it do much to his repute to sue WSJ and win his case even though he can't enforce any judgement for monetary compensation," he reasoned.