

## **Berlusconi's lawyers try to have sex trial suspended**

**Reuters**

**October 03, 2011**

MILAN, Oct 3 — Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's trial on charges he paid for sex with an underage prostitute should be put on hold for months until Italy's top court decides which judges have jurisdiction, his lawyers said today.

In a legal submission, Berlusconi's lawyers said a Milan court has no jurisdiction in the case and that Berlusconi should be tried by a special tribunal for ministers. Italy's top court is due to rule on the matter in early February.

A suspension would buy Berlusconi's defence time and avoid more negative headlines for the weakened premier, who faces a string of scandals and is fighting to stave off a market crisis threatening to send Italy's debt sliding out of control.

The 75-year old media billionaire denies any wrongdoing and accuses Milan magistrates of waging a politically-motivated campaign to oust him from power. A ruling on his lawyers' suspension request is expected later today.

The prostitution trial centres on accusations that he paid to have sex with Moroccan-born teenager Karima El Mahroug, a nightclub dancer known by the stage name of Ruby.

Berlusconi is also accused of telephoning Milan police officers last May to have her released from custody when she was detained over theft allegations, in order to avoid a scandal.

Berlusconi says he did not have sex with El Mahroug. He has acknowledged making the phone call to police, in which he said El Mahroug was the granddaughter of then Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, but says he did not exert any improper influence. — Reuters

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/world/article/berlusconis-lawyers-try-to-have-sex-trial-suspended/>