

Osama's family not all terrorists: Dr M

PM defends business dealings with Bin Laden group

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By S. Gayathri

Mahathir: Omar not on the blacklist

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Ove was reported to have been Khalid Almihdhar, one of the five alleged to have commandeered the Boeing 757 that crashed into the Pentagon in Washington on Sept 11.

"In Malaysia, the system is such that if there are known terrorists, they will be put on a blacklist so that when they come through we will identify them.

"When we identify them, it is not necessary to arrest them unless they have done something in the country or

there are extradition proceedings against them," he said.

Mahathir added that Omar is not on the blacklist and as such he can come in and out.

Unfortunately, he said, in some countries, including those in Asia, everyone with an Arabic or Malay name is singled out for questioning.

He said many Malays travelling by air are being questioned because they have the word "bin" in their names.

"Because they have names like Mahathir bin Mohamad, they think 'bin Mohamad' must be a relative of bin Laden," he said.

mean that the whole family are terrorists ... just because some Muslims took this kind of terrorist action, it doesn't mean all Muslims are terrorists," he said.

The sprawling Bin Laden group, founded by Osama's father, Mohammed bin Oud bin Laden, is still Saudi Arabia's biggest construction business, with a reputed turnover of billions of US dollars.

Born in Riyadh in 1957, Osama, the 17th of 52 children, is said to have inherited some US\$300 million (RM1.1 billion) but has been estranged from his family since the early 1990s. The Saudi government revoked his citizenship in 1994.

Mahathir also said that Omar was involved in a prawn farming project in Kedah which unfortunately failed and has now been taken over by a government firm.

He said no further information has been obtained from the United States on two suspected hijackers whose presence in Malaysia was recorded in a US surveillance video.

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today a brother of wanted terrorist Osama bin Laden had been awarded a contract to build a tunnel in the KL International Airport (KLIA) project.

He said Saudi businessman Omar bin Laden, who successfully completed the building works, had built mosques in Mecca and Medina. The KLIA was opened in 1998.

"The Bin Laden family is rich ... they have many children, about 50, because they practise polygamy.

"Just because one member of the family is a terrorist, it doesn't

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