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Govt to produce White Paper on Al Ma'unah

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon: The government will produce a White Paper on the Al Ma'unah, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the government can now produce it as the trial is over.

"We could not produce it before as the trial was ongoing and it would have been contempt of court," he told a press conference after addressing more than 600 civil servants at the Third Primary Civil Servants gathering here.

"However, I don't know whether we can ever convince PAS, because even when we hang these people, PAS will still say that the hanging is actually a *sandiwara* (drama) . . . that they are actually not dead."

On another note, Mahathir said the two suspected terrorists involved in the Sept 11 bombing, Khalid al-Mirdha and Nawaf al-Azmi, were found to have been living in the United States for almost a year before the incident.

"I was asked why we did not arrest these terrorists who were involved in the Sept 11 attack when they were here as tourists," he said.

"But they have been living in the US for almost a year, why didn't the US arrest them."

"They were also in the Switzerland as tourists and yet the Swiss authority did not arrest them either."

Mahathir said *Jane's Intelligence Review* does not understand the situation at all.

"It's as if we could tell that they were going to bomb the World Trade Centre," he said.

A Singapore daily, *Berita Harian*, had reported, quoting *Jane's Intelligence Review*, that the Sept 11 attacks could have been avoided had Malaysia intercepted and arrested the suspected terrorists.

Both were found to have visited Malaysia from Jan 5 to Jan 8, 2000.