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Mahathir-Deportation

DEPORTATION OF TERROR SUSPECT IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAW, SAYS MAHATHIR

By: Ahmad Fuad Yahya

SUBANG JAYA, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today suspected American terrorist Ahmed Ibrahim Bilal had to leave Malaysia because he did not have any valid travel document.

"We go according to the law," the prime minister said. "In this country the rule of law applies. If a person has no document he has to leave the country."

The prime minister was asked to comment on the deportation of Ahmed Ibrahim to the United States at a news conference after opening a seminar on "Learning From Korea" and the Sunway Convention Centre here.

Ahmed was turned over to US officials this morning by the Malaysian police and he was promptly removed from the country to return to the United States.

The U.S. embassy here, in a brief statement to the media, thanked the Malaysian government for the handing over of Ahmed Ibrahim.

The embassy statement reads: "Ahmed Ibrahim Bilal was turned over to U.S. officials this morning by the Royal Malaysia Police and was promptly removed from the country to return to the United States.

"We are extremely grateful to the government of Malaysia for their assistance."

The Immigration Department issued a removal order against the 25-year-old International Islamic University Malaysia student yesterday as his visa expired following the revocation of his passport by the U.S. government.

The High Court yesterday denied an extension of a court order preventing the deportation of Ahmed Ibrahim after his habeas corpus application was postponed to today.

High Court Judge Datuk S. Augustine Paul in his decision said a stay could not be granted to the student as he was an illegal immigrant after his passport had been revoked by the U.S. government.

Asked whether the government's action to deport Ahmed Ibrahim hastily was because of suggestions that it feared being accused of harbouring a terrorist, Dr Mahathir said:

"No, we go according to the law, not according to rumours and public opinion. If the law says you cannot keep a person with no document, then that's it.

"We are not talking about offences. We are talking about not having document".

-- BERNAMA

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