

07 OCT 2002

Mahathir-Extradite

US' EXTRADITION REQUEST REFERRED TO AG, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 7 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has referred the case of Ahmed Ibrahim Bilal to the Attorney-General's (AG) chambers to study the government's legal obligation towards the United States' request for his extradition, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The prime minister said the government would conduct its own investigation on Ahmed Ibrahim to see whether the charge against him had basis before taking any action.

Ibrahim is among six people wanted by the US on charges of abetting to launch a war against the US and providing support to the Al-Qaeda network.

"We have ways to handle the problem. That's why the matter has been referred to the AG as we don't have an extradition arrangement with the US," Dr Mahathir told a media conference after opening the 10th Commonwealth Chief Auditors Conference, here.

"If we are to hand him over to the US, we must know whether or not he is guilty. What right has the US to ask us to surrender him to them. We have to study all this. We always go by the law," he said.

On Puteri Umno, Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said every Umno member was free to lodge a police report if someone had committed an offence.

However, this should not be done for political gain, he said when asked about a police report lodged by a Puteri Umno member, Zalilah Yusof, against its pro tem chief, Azalina Othman Said, for alleged misappropriation.

"She saw me, she said there's an offence (committed by Azalina). I said that if there's an offence she should report to the police. This is different offence, not a political offence.

"But it's not right if we suddenly bring this out and make a press statement when we want to contest for the division chief's post," he said.

Asked about the large number of candidates contesting for the Puteri Umno chief's post, he said there were bound to be teething problems as the the movement was still new.

Besides Azalina, Mastina Hamid, Raihan Suleiman, Mazibah Mohamed Zain and Ummi Hafilda Ali have offered to contest the post.

Azalina now has 109 nominations for the movement's elections on Nov 1 while the rest have not received any nomination.

-- BERNAMA

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