Karpal to call PM and ex-aide in Altantuya civil suit
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By Hafiz Yatim

Senior lawyer Karpal Singh will apply to call Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his former aide de camp DSP Musa Safri in the RM100 million civil suit arising from the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

NONESpeaking to reporters in Shah Alam, Karpal (left), who is representing Altantuya's family, said he will re-activate the suit, which has been pending until a decision is made by the criminal court.

He said although the acquittal of the two policemen by the Court of Appeal this morning may have a bearing on the civil suit, the case would be decided on a balance of probabilities.

"Like the (former American footballer) OJ Simpson's case, although he was acquitted, the civil suit found him liable (for his former wife's death).

“We will call Najib and also Musa to link the circumstances leading to Altantuya’s death. Musa could not have acted on his own in this matter. There is still a chance of establishing guilt on somebody’s part,” Karpal said.

He said the Altantuya murder was serious matter, for a foreigner had come to the country and got blown up and nobody is now liable for the killing, following the acquittal of the two former Special Action Force (UTK or Unit Tindakan Khas) by the Court of Appeal.

Neither Najib nor Musa were called in the trial, despite suggestions and speculation being made that Altantuya had played a role in Malaysia's purchase of the two Scorpene submarines through a company owned by political analyst Abdul Razak Baginda.

NONEAbdul Razak, who was charged with abetting in the murder, was acquitted by the High Court without his defence being called.

Altantuya's father, Setev Shaariibuu (right), filed the civil suit in 2007 against Abdul Razak Baginda, ex-UTK officers Azilah Hadri and Sirul Azhar Umar and the government over the circumstances surrounding Altantuya’s death.

‘Prosecution did badly’

The non-calling of Musa was one of the points raised by defence counsel Kamarul Hisham Kamaruddin, who took the position that this was fatal to the prosecution's case.

The Court of Appeal judges in their judgment today said the non-calling of Musa had created an adverse inference in the prosecution's case.

Karpal said while he was glad the prosecution would be appealing today's decision, its handling of the case was "not up to the mark".

He said as lawyers holding a watching brief for the family in the case, they were limited to the things they could do.

"Although we wanted to see Najib and Musa being called, this was not done by the prosecution. Nevertheless, we may have a chance in the civil suit," he said.

However, Karpal admitted that the civil suit may have to wait until the prosecution's appeal against the acquittal is decided by the Federal Court.

He said he would try and contact Setev through a Mongolian translator to get further instructions on the matter.

Azilah and Sirul were acquitted by the Court of Appeal today after it found serious misdirections to have been committed by the High Court trial judge.

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