

'PM does not know Altantuya', PMO repeats to Al Jazeera
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“Prime Minister Najib Razak did not know, has never met, has never had any communication with and has no link whatsoever with the deceased.”

This is the official response from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to Al Jazeera's explosive investigative piece on the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu that was aired today.

“The two convicted individuals were not the Prime Minister's personal guards. This allegation is intentionally misleading, and has been used to perpetuate baseless conspiracy theories.

“They were members of a unit of the Royal Malaysian Police that provides rotating security for government officials and visiting dignitaries. The prime minister was not aware of the actions of the individuals until their arrest,” says the statement released by the PMO today and posted on the Al Jazeera website.

“Comprehensive legal process has taken place, including police investigations and court trials, including at Malaysia's High Court, Court of Appeal and Federal Court. The guilty parties have been convicted and sentenced. At no point during any of these legal stages was the prime minister implicated, even indirectly. These malicious allegations are therefore also an affront to Malaysia's judiciary.

“Political opponents and their media allies have been trying to attack the prime minister on this issue for many years. But there is absolutely no evidence of any wrongdoing, and there never will be - for the very good reason that the allegations are entirely false smears motivated by political gain.

“The deceased was never involved in the purchase of submarines for the Royal Malaysian Navy, as has been alleged. The purchase was directly negotiated between the Malaysian and French governments. Perimekar is 40 percent owned by the Malaysian Armed Forces Fund Board (LTAT), a respected government statutory body.

“Perimekar was paid by the government of Malaysia to handle all logistics, training and coordination on behalf of the Royal Malaysian Navy. The training included that which was necessary for submariners and technicians to handle the submarines. The Navy did not have the manpower to handle these matters over the eight-year period of the construction of the submarines and coordination of the logistics. This was a services contract for work done and was transparent.

“The purported French investigation pertains to the possibility of any 'kickbacks' that may have been paid by the French companies to Malaysian officials to secure the submarine contract. There were similar investigations into French defence contracts with Taiwan and

India. The original deal was signed in 2002. There has never been any communication from the investigation's judges to the prime minister."

'Baseless smears'

"The reality is that there was absolutely no wrongdoing on the prime minister's part in the government's purchase of the submarines. Absolutely no payments ever benefitted him. Again, these are baseless smears for political gain," the statement concluded. Al Jazeera's weekly programme 101 East aired a documentary 'Murder in Malaysia' that attempts a follow up on a murder mystery that continues to haunt Malaysia right to the top of the political establishment.

"Shot, then blown to smithereens with military grade explosives, the 2006 killing of Altantuya Shaariibuu was one of Malaysia's most sensational murder cases," wrote the news agency.

The journalist behind the report was allegedly deported in the midst of her investigations.

The programme was broadcast today at 6.30am with a repeat at 5.30pm and available online at its website.

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