

**M'sia still 'initiating negotiations' for Sirul's extradition**  
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**PARLIAMENT** The government still in the process of initiating negotiations with Australia to extradite former police commando Sirul Azhar Umar to Malaysia, said Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid.

"This is a long process as this not only involves diplomatic ties, but a complex negotiation that needs to be dealt with carefully," he said in his capacity as home minister.

This suggests the government has yet to start the negotiating process despite Sirul, who has been sentenced to death over the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu, fled the country over a year ago.

Zahid was responding in a parliamentary written reply to Ramkarpal Singh (DAP-Bukit Gelugor), who asked if the government had submitted a formal request to Australia to extradite the fugitive.

On Jan 13 the Federal Court upheld a High Court decision sentencing Sirul and chief inspector Azilah Hadri to death for the murder of Altantuya in 2006, after the duo had been acquitted on appeal.

Sirul fled to Australia before the decision, and Malaysia faces an obstacle in Australia's law preventing extradition of persons facing the death sentence.