

Let's meet 'father to father', Altantuya's dad tells PM
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, April 9 — The father of murdered Mongolian model Altantuya Shaariibuu expressed interest today in meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak "father to father" to seek justice and closure for the brutal murder of his daughter in 2006.

Dr Setev Shaariibuu, who is in Malaysia for three days, said he had requested for a meeting with Najib before but the latter had allegedly avoided it.

"The last time I wanted to meet him but he ran away.

"The people of Malaysia support me and I want to go further to ensure this case is sped up," he said.

Today, the bereaved father said he would not mind an opportunity to meet with Najib (right), but not in the latter's capacity as prime minister.

"As a father, he can understand my grief of losing a child better," he told reporters in Parliament today, speaking in Mongolian, which was translated by his late daughter's childhood friend Tsoggerel Och.

"I want to say to him — I am not meeting you as the PM. I am meeting you as a father, as a man. Father to father, you can understand what I feel," he said.

Setev repeatedly denied rumours that he had been paid off by the Malaysian government in exchange for his silence, saying that his family was now in dire financial straits following his daughter's death.

He claimed that the Mongolian government had written many diplomatic notes to Malaysia, requesting for investigations to be reopened to determine the true mastermind behind Altantuya's murder.

"I am very surprised that the Malaysian government, in this past six years, has not responded to the notes.

"It cannot be that they have not received it," Setev said.

Altantuya's one-time lover Abdul Razak Baginda, who was said to be a close associate of Najib, was acquitted of a charge of abetting two Special Action Squad members — Azilah Hadri and Sirul Azhar Umar — to commit the murder in 2006.

The murder was committed between 10pm on October 19, 2006, and 1am the following day at a clearing in Shah Alam's Mukim Bukit Raja.

While Abdul Razak was acquitted, his co-accused Azilah and Sirul were found guilty and sentenced to death. Setev has also filed a RM100 million civil suit against the government

and the convicted duo in June 2007, seeking compensation for the hardships his spouse and two grandchildren have suffered because of Altantuya's death.

"His (Setev's) wife cannot sleep; she has been suffering from recurring nightmares.

"It is no wonder, not when your child was murdered in that way," Och said.

Setev today also appealed for help and financial support from Malaysians, pointing out that he has already forked out some RM60,000 for legal costs to the Malaysian government for his daughter's murder trial.

"I know that Malaysians were not responsible for this case. I have them with me, supporting me.

"And I hope that your media is now open and democratic," he said.

"Now, I want this case sped up and I want my daughter's remains to be brought home to our country."

Och later told reporters that Altantuya's remains are still in Malaysia, adding that under Buddhist belief, the soul of the dead would not be able to rest in peace if the body is not buried in its home ground.

PKR MP Chua Tian Chang, who was also present at today's press conference, appealed to the government to offer financial aid to Altantuya's family as her gruesome murder was committed on Malaysian soil.

"The government must show remorse to this very unfortunate incident... so there should be some sort of compensation given to family," he said.

Joining his party colleague, Kelana Jaya MP Loh Gwo-Burne agreed and pointed out that Setev's 14-year-old grandchild has needed to work part-time to help support the grieving family.

"To know that the government has allowed this to happen without giving proper redress or justice... I appeal to Malaysians that if you feel any responsibility for having paid the money for the bullets and C4 explosives (used to blow up Altantuya's body), please step forward... this gentleman needs your help," he said.

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