

PAS's Mahfuz insists Sirul was fine with mother, uncle meeting Dr M

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Former police commando Sirul Azhar Umar, who left for Australia just before he was convicted for the murder of Altantuya Shaariibuu has no objection to his mother and uncle meeting with former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, PAS MP Mahfuz Omar said today.

He dismissed claims by Sirul's lawyer, Hasnal Redzua Merican that he was never keen on the meeting.

"Also, the mother and I had earlier informed him about the possibility of the meeting and he consented to it," he told The Malaysian Insider.

Mahfuz said that Sirul's mother, Piah Samat, and uncle had called Sirul, who is now being held at the Villawood immigration centre in Sydney, a day before the meeting..

The PAS information chief said Sirul had not expressed any objection to the meeting.

"So, I don't understand why Sirul's lawyers are telling the media that he is disappointed and that politicians are using his mother and uncle for political mileage," he said.

Mahfuz was responding to reports that Hasnal had said that his client was pleading to politicians not to use him for their political agenda.

Hasnal, in a Sinar Harian report today, said that any attempt to politicise his case would disrupt his legal proceeding to remain in Australia.

"Sirul contacted me twice since it was reported that his mother and uncle had met with Dr Mahahir," he said, adding that his client sounded very disappointed.

According to Hasnal, Sirul had also expressed his desire to remain in Australia.

"He is determined to exhaust all legal avenues to stop being repatriated to Malaysia.

"He has appealed to everyone to give him space to face the legal challenges with peace of mind," he added.

Sirul had engaged two legal teams in Australia to handle his immigration and extradition matters.

According to media reports, Sirul would not be sent back to Malaysia as Canberra forbids repatriating suspects who faced the death penalty, setting up a potential tug-of-war.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Sirul's extradition process was delayed because it involved "complicated legal issues".

Sirul's mother, Piah met Dr Mahathir on Wednesday and begged for his help to intervene in the case so that Sirul could escape the gallows.

Mahfuz was said to have set up the meeting which reportedly took place at Dr Mahathir's office in Putrajaya.

He made headlines recently for being one of the few people who had managed to talk to Sirul, both through phone and by meeting with him in Australia.

He also brought Sirul's mother to Australia to meet with the convicted murderer.

Sirul and Chief Inspector Azilah Hadri were found guilty of the murder. A five-man Federal Court bench led by Chief Justice Tun Arifin Zakaria sentenced the men to be hanged, overturning a 2013 Court of Appeal ruling over the killing of the Mongolian translator Altantuya.

Evidence in court revealed that Altantuya was murdered before her body was blown up by C4 explosives on October 18, 2006, in the outskirts of Shah Alam, in Selangor.

Despite the conviction, the motive for the murder was never revealed nor determined by the court. – April 12, 2015.

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