

**Sirul's death sentence not right if just following orders, says  
Dr M  
The Malaysian Insider  
April 13, 2015**

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reiterated that he had not accused Datuk Seri Najib Razak of murdering Altantuya Shaariibuu but only wanted to know who had ordered her killing.

The former prime minister said in any normal circumstances, a soldier or a policeman would not shoot to kill anyone unless threatened, or ordered to so.

"This is about a person's life. If Sirul is in the wrong, then kill him. But if he was only following orders, it is not fair that he is sent to the gallows," said Dr Mahathir in reference to former police commando Corporal Sirul Azhar Umar, who was sentenced to death with Chief Inspector Azilah Hadri, for Altantuya's murder.

Dr Mahathir said many people have come to see him, and further questioned if it was wrong for Sirul's family to come and see him as well.

"If Sirul's family wants to see me, I will see them.

"This is not about what happened eight years ago. This is about sending someone's son to the gallows today," he said.

Sirul is being held at the Villawood immigration centre in Sydney after his arrest in Queensland on January 20, following a red alert issued by Interpol.

His mother, Piah Samat, had visited him at the detention centre with the help of PAS information chief Datuk Mahfuz Omar. Last week, she also met Dr Mahathir.

It was reported that Piah will likely file for pardon on behalf of her son.

Mahfuz had said he would guide Piah on applying for clemency on behalf of her son to the Sultan of Selangor.

In an earlier interview, Dr Mahathir had said that the general perception that he was exploiting convicted murderer Sirul's case for political gain was wrong as he only wanted to help his former bodyguard.

The former prime minister defended himself from accusations that he was politicising the murder case, when he said the authorities must find out who had ordered Sirul to kill the woman.

"I did not talk about this for a long time but those two (Sirul and Azilah) are facing the death penalty. You have to help them and save them.

"Sirul was once my bodyguard and now he is facing the noose... when I talk of this,

they say I am with the opposition. But this is a man's life.

"Supposing you are sentenced to be hanged for something you didn't do and nobody helps you. 'Mampiuah pi la' (to hell with it)... you want me to be like that?" he had said in the interview.

Sirul and Azilah were charged with the murder of Altantuya in 2006 and convicted in 2009.

They were freed after the appellate court acquitted them in 2013, but the Federal Court reversed the acquittal in January this year and sent them back to hang.

Sirul was already in Australia when the verdict was delivered. – April 13, 2015

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