

Altantuya's father meets Mahathir over possible fresh probe

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PUTRAJAYA, June 20 (Bernama) -- Mongolian national Dr Shaariibuu Setev met Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad here today and it is learned that the Prime Minister agreed that a fresh probe can be conducted into the murder of the former's daughter Altantuya Shaariibuu if there is new evidence.

Family lawyer Ramkarpal Singh, who accompanied Dr Shaariibuu to the Prime Minister's Office in Perdana Putra here to discuss the possible reopening of the investigation, said they explained the entire process of the case to the Prime Minister.

Ramkarpal Singh said Dr Mahathir was well aware of the facts of the case and circumstances and had stressed that everything must adhere to and follow the rule of law.

Altantuya is believed to have been killed and her body blown up with explosives at a secondary jungle in Mukim Bukit Raja, Klang, between 10 pm on Oct 19, 2006, and 1 am on Oct 20, 2006.

In 2009, former police Special Action Unit members Sirul Azhar Umar and Azilah Hadri were found guilty of Altantuya's murder. The Court of Appeal overturned their sentences in 2013 but, upon the prosecution's appeal, they were upheld by the Federal Court.

However, Sirul fled to Australia where he was detained by the Australian Immigration at its detention centre in Sydney after Interpol issued a red notice on him. He has been at the detention centre since 2015. He is hoping to get asylum in Australia.

Asked on the meeting's outcome, Ramkarpal Singh said: "There is a hope to solve the matter since there are new leads to this case. We are happy with the meeting and are positive about getting better results very soon."

He said he had confidence in the police investigation and Dr Mahathir, too, had given his word that the government would cooperate in any way it could according to the law.

Shaariibuu, who is in Malaysia to find out who ordered his daughter's murder and the motive for the killing, will have a statement of his recorded by the police before he returns to Mongolia tomorrow, said the lawyer.

"The next step is to follow up with the police and the Attorney-General on the status of the case. We will give the police three to four months to complete the investigation, " he said.

Ramkarpal Singh said he did not rule out the possibility that the police, from their investigation, knew who ordered the murder of Altantuya.

"I don't know whether it is one person or more than one person (who ordered the murder). We hope the police will investigate further."

"The identity of the person is too obvious and important. It could not have been left out in the previous investigation, " he said.

Shaariibuu, through his translator, expressed his gratitude and satisfaction over the chance he had to meet Dr Mahathir today and said he was optimistic that his daughter's murder in Malaysia 12 years ago would be completely solved.

"The most precious thing (in life) is a human being and, in the case of my daughter's murder, the law (justice) must be served, " he said.

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