

# Drug kingpins now avoiding us

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INTERNATIONAL drug trafficking syndicates have begun to avoid using Malaysia as a transit country in their operations, the Prime Minister said yesterday.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in his capacity as Home Minister, said this in a written reply to Haji Ibrahim Azmi Hassan (BN-Kuala Nerus).

Haji Ibrahim had asked whether it was true that Malaysia was known as a drug centre in Asia and if so, why the situation had reached such a stage.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was not a country which could be regarded as a drug centre in Asia because it was not a producer of drugs.

However, it was used as a transit

country by international drug traffickers for their smuggling and distribution operations from the Golden Triangle to other countries in the world.

## Transit country

He said: "The Government has taken several strict legal measures and these have been effective in reducing drug trafficking activities in the country.

"Among these are the 1983 amendment to the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 providing for mandatory death sentences for convicted drug traffickers.

"In 1985 the Government introduced

the Dangerous Drugs (Special Preventive Measures) Act to provide for the detention of anyone found to be involved in any activity related to drug trafficking.

"Since the implementation of these laws, the Government has found that international drug trafficking syndicates are avoiding using Malaysia as a transit country.

"The Government hopes that drug smuggling activities in Malaysia will be further reduced (if not altogether eradicated) when a new law is introduced later, which will empower the Government to seize from anyone assets gained from activities related to drug trafficking."