

CNS3833

R GE 14-09 00229 EA324

aae tbe

ARQAM LEADER MAY BE ARRESTED?

Mahathir - Arqam

JITRA, Sept 14 (Bernama) -- The government will evaluate the activities of Ustaz Azhaari Muhammad, leader of the Al-Arqam missionary movement, and may detain him under the Internal Security Act (ISA) if he is found to be a threat to national security, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the government had thus far found out that the Al-Arqam movement had resorted to abuse of religion for self-interest, and added that this could not be allowed to spread.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was responding to reporters' questions as to whether the government would detain Ustaz Ashaari, who is reported to be in Phuket, Thailand, on his return to Malaysia. Earlier, the prime minister had opened the Kubang Pasu Umno Division delegates meeting here.

He did not say whether the government would ban the movement although it has been barred from carrying out its activities in government offices.

+I believe we should look into the teachings propagated by them (Al-Arqam followers) because they deviated from Islam. They believe in what is referred to as Aurad Muhammadiyah, believe in their teacher, and believe that Imam Mahadi had appeared in the jungles in Indonesia, and so on. These are all rubbish,+ he said. -- more

♥14/09/16-04MST

CNS3842

R GE 14-09 00182 EA325

aae tbe

Mahathir - Arqam 2 Jitra

Therefore, if the people were exposed to these teachings, they would be confused and might lose faith, he said.

+And, there is a possibility this group will use its influence for its own interests, and this will be detrimental to us; for example, it may intimidate university students to leave their studies and get married to members of the group,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he had heard of Al-Arqam members taking on as wives foreign women who had embraced Islam by saying the act was in accordance with the needs of Islam.

A newspaper report today said top leaders of the movement had left for Phuket to meet Ustaz Ashaari to discuss the activities of the movement which had been banned by the government.

Earlier, in his speech opening the meeting, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Kubang Pasu Umno Division head, advised the people to be wary of groups which used religion for their own political interests. -- more

♥14/09/16-20MST

CNS3851

R GE 14-09 00164 EA326

aae tbe

Mahathir - Arqam 3 (last) Jitra

He said members of the groups often used Arabic words in their speeches when the use of the language of the Quran for one's own interest is not good.

+One must not belittle verses of the Quran for the sole purpose of garnering votes,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said there were also groups which criticised Vision 2020 by saying it was materialistic. He added that the critics only wanted to hear of +Wawasan akhirat+ (Vision Hereafter).

The prime minister said groups which such opinion did not have the right understanding of Islam.

He said Vision 2020 was aimed at bringing progress, balanced between this world and the hereafter for Malaysians.

If the country is progressive, it will be easy for the people to earn a living and worship, and this was a part of what Islam preached, he said. --
Bernama

♥14/09/16-28MST