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Mahathir-Arqam

GOVT TO PROSECUTE ASHAARI.

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RAWANG, Aug 1 (Bernama) -- The government will prosecute al-Arqam leader Ashaari Muhammad if he returns to Malaysia, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The form of government action would be dependent on his actions contrary to the laws of the country, he said.

"I think this time we have got all the evidence ... it is clear that they (al-Arqam members) have deviated from the teachings of Islam. I think there is less reluctance to act against them now," he told reporters after opening the Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua (Perodua) Sdn Bhd plant here.

Ashaari has been using Thailand as his base of operations since 1988 when he left Malaysia on a self-imposed exile but Thailand has ordered him to leave in a week after refusing to renew his visa which expired on July 20.

Dr Mahathir said the action to be taken against Ashaari would depend on the decision of the pertinent enforcement authorities, and that he could not elaborate. -- more

HK MGN

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Mahathir-Arqam 2 (last) Rawang

He said it had been difficult for the government to take action against the movement in the past because there was insufficient evidence.

Furthermore, there had been groups which could not be convinced of the deviationist teachings the movement had resorted to, he said.

"Now, they (the deviationist teachings) are clear. Therefore, I am convinced, action will be taken (against Ashaari)," he said. -- Bernama

HK MGN

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