

CNS6319

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aae tbe

Mahathir-Arqam

SWIFT ACTION NEEDED TO CURB AL ARQAM'S DEVIANT TEACHINGS, SAYS PM

<sup>194</sup>  
KUALA LUMPUR, Aug. 5 (Bernama) -- The government has to resort to swift action against Al Arqam, a threat to the practice and teachings of Islam in the country if the movement was allowed to flourish, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Should Al Arqam be allowed to move freely, it would eventually grow big, and once people believed in the movement's teaching, it would be difficult to turn them around, he added.

The government did not fear the movement as made out by certain quarters, the Prime Minister told reporters after opening the first East Asian Young Leaders Congress here.

Dr Mahathir said: "We don't want our children to grow with that kind of understanding (by adopting the practice and teachings of Al Arqam).

"It is a question of faith and, as you know, faith is not based on reason.

"If you believe (in it), you believe and if you believe that this man (Al Arqam leader Ashaari Muhammad) is going to be the messiah, then there is no way we can tell the people who are converted to their views that he is not (a messiah). So, we have to do it (take actions) very early." --  
more

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▼05/08/15-01MST

CNS6324

U GE 05-08 00158 EA351

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Mahathir-Arqam 2 Kuala Lumpur

The National Fatwa Council today outlawed Al Arqam and all its teachings and beliefs.

Replying to reporters' questions, Dr Mahathir said the government had taken similar action on other groups or movements involved in deviant teachings in the country.

"They must conform with the expected version of the teachings of Islam. What they do is likely to confuse the people in this country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he did not think that Malaysians would support the movement's desire to form the government in this country.

However, he said Ashaari was welcome to try to take over the government but he must do it in a legitimate way by forming a political party.

Ashaari could come back, stop his deviant teachings and form a political party to contest in the general election, he added. -- more

ES LDB

▼05/08/15-13MST

CNS6364

U GE 05-08 00232 EA354

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Mahathir-Arqam 3 Kuala Lumpur

"We have contested through political parties... I have lost in elections. So, in Malaysia, it is possible to win and also to lose and even some states have gone to the opposition (parties)," he said.

Asked if Ashaari could join Umno, Dr Mahathir said he could do so provided he subscribed to the principles of Umno.

Dr Mahathir said: "As you know the second man in Umno now (Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim) was formerly very much against us. As leader of ABIM (then), he was very anti-government."

He was also asked about Ashaari's plan to return from Jordan and the Al Arqam leader's intention to sue him for unfounded allegations against him and the Al Arqam movement.

Dr Mahathir said Ashaari was welcome to do so as long as he acted within the law.

Al Arqam could also sue Islamic Centre Director-General Haji Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir Zainal for defamation over his (Zainal's) claim that the movement had set up an armed wing called "Tentera Badar."

"He can do that too if he has grounds for it... but he must accept that there is rule of law here and the law will apply to him equally as it applies to everybody else," he added. -- more

ES LDB

▼05/08/15-45MST

CNS6369

U GE 05-08 00119 EA355

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Mahathir-Arqam 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

About the "Tentera Badar," Dr Mahathir said the movement advocated some kind of military action.

"They didn't actually get down to setting up this army. But, they have pamphlets which say that at some stage they need to have this kind of force in order to achieve their target," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said it would be up to the authorities concerned to decide what form of action to take against Ashaari on his return.

"If he has broken the law and they think that he should be arrested, they will do so," he added. -- Bernama

ES LDB

▼05/08/15-48MST

R GE 05-08 00171 EA356

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Mahathir-Arqam 5 (last) Kuala Lumpur (re-opens item)

In MELAKA, Law Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar said the outlawed Al-Arqam movement was free to take legal action against those whom it considered to have injured its rights and this included the government or its agencies.

If such action was taken by the movement, the matter would be referred to the Attorney-General for counter-action, he added.

"It is up to the courts to determine whether there is a case against us," he told reporters when commenting on the defamation suit filed by three Al Arqam members against Islamic Centre Director-General Haji Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir today.

The government would defend whatever stance it had taken against Al Arqam, Syed Hamid said after officiating the 10th anniversary celebrations of Institiut Teknologi Mara (ITM) Lendu, near Melaka.

He also said the government took action against Al Arqam because it had deviated from the true teachings of Islam. -- Bernama