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J AIS BAN ON MUSLIMS IN BODYBUILDING CONTEST FOR CABINET

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 25 (Bernama) -- The ban on Muslims taking part in a bodybuilding contest in Sarawak will be taken up with the Cabinet, Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

Muhyiddin said the Cabinet decision was important for his ministry as it would serve as a guidance in respect of the action taken by the Sarawak Islamic Religious Department (JAIS).

He was speaking to reporters after opening the Third Agong Cup Boxing Championship and the 19th Asian Boxing Championship at Stadium Negara, today. The championships will last till Aug 31.

Also present was Malaysian Amateur Boxing Federation (MABF) president and Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Isa Abdul Samad.

Muhyiddin was asked to comment on the ruling by JAIS as communicated in its letter received by the Sarawak Bodybuilding Association (SBA) on Aug 8. In the letter, JAIS chief enforcement officer Osman Ibrahim said it was "haram" for the Muslim male to expose their "aurat", from the navel down to the knee, in public.

Defying the ban, three contestants of the Islamic faith -- Rabu Suhaili, Rusli Ksssim and Bujang Jamah -- took part in the "Mr Kuching" bodybuilding contest, which SBA organised in Kuching last night.

Muhyiddin said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had earlier commented on the issue and he (Muhyiddin) declined to say anything further until the matter had been discussed by the Cabinet.

-- BERNAMA

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