

21 JUL 2000

Azmi-Al Ma'unah

LAUNCH CLEAN-UP OPERATION AGAINST AL-MA'UNAH, GOVT URGED

PASIR MAS, July 21 (Bernama) -- The government should launch a clean-up operation against the members and supporters of the deviationist group, Al-Ma'undah, Kelantan Umno Youth leader Azimi Daim said today.

He said those involved should be placed under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

"This is the best recourse open to us in ensuring the country's political stability," he told reporters after opening the Pasir Mas Sports Fest here.

Azimi, who is also a Umno Supreme Council member, was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the hatred campaign propagated by PAS had spawned groups like the Al-Ma'unah which was involved in the recent arms heist and hostage in Perak.

"If we do nothing, the country's stability will be jeopardised, our economy will suffer and we will have social problems on hand," he said.

He said stern action should also be taken against those who slandered the government that the Sauk incident involving the Al-Ma'unah group was a drama staged by Umno.

The Al-Ma'unah group took four hostages after robbing two army camps in Gerik, Perak of a large cache of weapons and ammunition on July 2. They murdered two of the hostages before surrendering themselves on July 6 to members of the security forces who had surrounded their hideout in Bukit Janalek, Sauk.

"To us in Umno, this is no small matter as such allegation could result in racial unrest," he said.

Azimi said the Umno Youth would also hold ceramah all over the country to counter the allegation made by irresponsible people.

--BERNAMA

BD ABG