

Dr M has 'different ideas' about surau demolition

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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad believes that revocation of a Singaporean resort owner's permanent residency status for letting Buddhists use a surau was not a harsh move.

However, the former premier appeared to have some misgivings about demolishing the surau.

"The government has a right to retract (the owner's) PR status.

"I don't feel that retracting his PR is a harsh move. But to demolish a surau, I don't know. I have a different idea," he said.

He claimed that the public had demanded for the surau to be demolished and it would be necessary for the authorities to comply.

Mahathir was speaking to reporters at the sidelines of his Aidilfitri open house function in Seri Kembangan today.

On Aug 17, the federal government revoked the Singaporean's permanent residency status after he was held in remand for four days.

Police are investigating the matter under Section 295 of the Penal Code for defiling a place of worship with the intention to cause insult to a religion.

If found guilty, the resort owner can be jailed up to two years, fined or both.

After investigations are completed, the Johor Islamic Religious Council (MAINJ) plans to demolish the surau.

MAINJ will conduct their investigations once police investigations are complete. The Johor Sultan will then be informed of the matter before the state government takes action.

However, some scholars have urged MAINJ to reconsider these plans.

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