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Arqam-Sincerity

ASHAARI TOLD TO PROVE HIS SINCERITY

KUALA LUMPUR, June 6 (Bernama) -- Former Al-Arqam leader Ashaari Muhammad should prove his non-involvement in efforts to revive the banned movement by advising former members to cease such activities, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob said today.

He said that Ashaari could show that he was truly sincere in renouncing the ideology upheld by the movement when it was disbanded two years ago by advising his former followers to do the same.

Ashaari could help by issuing some kind of statement to hardcore members to cease practising the ideology of the banned movement, he told reporters after attending the presentation of excellent service awards to the ministry's staff by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Tunku Abdul Rahman Memorial here.

He should prove that he was not involved in efforts to revive the movement and was sincere in not wanting his followers to do so, he added.

Megat Junid said that the ministry had identified those involved in such efforts but further investigations would be conducted before action could be taken.

He said that more former members of the movement could be detained for being involved in efforts to revive the movement.

The government, he said, was very cautious in the matter which should be resolved immediately before it becomes serious.

Megat Junid however said that the government did not intend to take action against Karya One Sdn Bhd, the publisher of the magazines Tatih, O.K!, Ayu and Dunia Baru which allegedly promoted the movement's Aurad Muhamadiyah ideology and the idolisation of Ashaari as its chairman, Tamrin Ghaffar, had agreed to suspend its operation.

He said that Tamrin had given his undertaking recently, adding that Tamrin had expressed surprise on learning of the contents of the magazines.

The movement was banned in 1994 when the government found that its ideology was against the teachings of Islam.

Ashaari, who was brought back from south Thailand in October 1994 and detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA), later made a public confession and advised all its members to return to the true path.

However, last month, four former members of the movement were detained under the ISA when they were found to be practising the ideology and trying to revive the movement.

On Monday, police detained Ashaari's first wife, Khadijah Aam, and Karya One Sdn Bhd director Pahrol Mohamed Goui. -- BERNAMA

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