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Caricatures in Harakah `could incite hatred'

KANGAR, Sat. - The Home Ministry is taking a serious view of the use of caricatures in the Pas newsletter Harakah which depicts the country's leaders as Zionist agents.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid said action may be taken against the management if such caricatures were deemed as a blatant attempt to incite hatred among the people.

Harakah had been using a caricature of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad with the Jewish "Star of David" for his nose in its recent publications.

"We will study the implication of Harakah's tactics to discredit the country's leaders, and will take action if we find it justifiable to do so," Azmi said.

Azmi, who was speaking at the Perlis Menteri Besar's office today, said the Ministry would continue to scrutinise Harakah's editorial contents.

The newsletter's management had been called to the ministry several times, and advised against "crossing the boundaries" of responsible journalism, he said.

"However, we have yet to ban them because the Government thinks the people should be allowed to judge on what is truth, and what is slander."

While speaking earlier at the "Our Country, Our Responsibility" programme in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Arau, he said Malaysians should cherish the peace and prosperity achieved by the country.

He told the 200 school principals and the Parent-Teacher Association chairmen attending the function to spread the message of how important it was to remain united in preventing the country from being recolonised.

The function, organised by the Education Ministry, was also attended by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kasim and State Education Department acting director Sulaiman Ismail.

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