

Return laureate award, Shahnon urged

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KUALA-LUMPUR: Two Umno leaders yesterday reiterated calls for Sik MP Datuk Shahnon Ahmad to return the national laureate award given to him in 1982 because his recent writings as well as his endorsement of PAS' crude ways are an insult to the nation's literary circles.

Federal Territory Umno liaison chief Tengku Datuk Adnan Tengku Mansor said Shahnon's behaviour seriously questioned his credibility in holding the

"Shahnon is senile and what he has written only shows his immaturity. He should take care of his neglected constituency," said Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Isa Samad.

Both leaders were speaking at a press conference after the opening ceremony of the Seputeh Umno division's delegates meeting.

They were asked to comment on Shahnon's claims in PAS' newsletter that the term *barua* (lackey) was not derogatory. Controversy over the word cropped up when PAS spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat labelled an ulama (religious scholar) as *barua*.

According to Mohd Isa, the contest of *barua* was crude and it was ironic that people who claimed to adhere to the tenets and principles of Islam endorsed the term without any qualms.

On another matter, Mohd Isa

said states could only be successfully developed if the federal and state governments worked in tandem.

"How can a state be developed if it constantly nit-picked with the Federal Government and levelled baseless accusations against the nation's leaders?"

"One cannot accept much development if this is the scenario and the *rakyat* must realise that the Federal Government is a crucial element in developing their states," he said.

Mohd Isa added that if people were content with mere indulgence in anti-Federal Government sentiments, then they should be prepared to accept the lack of development in their states.

Tengku Adnan, who is also Seputeh Umno division chairman, said the Government was working on upgrading public amenities such as non-Muslim places of worship in the constituency.

He also said it was the prerogative of Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to appoint the new party information chief to replace Datuk Mustapa Mohamed.