

Beware of

fanatics:

Mahathir

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DR MAHATHIR

ALOR STAR, Sat — Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad reminded the people last night not to be influenced by groups which spread deviant Islamic teachings.

He said such groups were only out to create chaos and disorder in the country.

"We have to be vigilant against such groups to ensure continued peace and prosperity in the country," he said at a fund-raising dinner of the Kubang Pasu Umno Division at Datuk Syed Omar Stadium here.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir was commenting on the Batu Pahat incident in which a group of religious fanatics attacked a police station last Thursday.

He described the incident as an attempt by the group to kill innocent people and create chaos in the area.

He said members of the group had acted

against the true teachings of Islam and had committed a serious crime.

The Government had repeatedly warned the people against such groups but some people criticised the Government for giving the warnings, he added.

"Now it is clear that the attire worn by the members of the group had some connection with their state of mind," he said.

In Johore Baru, Menteri Besar Tan Sri, Haji Othman Saat described the group who attacked the police station "as

being worse than the communist terrorists."

"How could they profess to be the followers of Islam when they go about attacking and slashing innocent unarmed men and women and, worse still, a pregnant woman.

"Islam advocates peace and advises mankind to do good and never resort to violence."

The Menteri Besar was speaking to reporters after opening the fifth Johore MCA annual convention at the Tasek Utara Golf Club.

Meanwhile, the Johore Islamic Religious Council will conduct a study to

amend the law to check false Islamic teachings.

Council chairman Datuk Haji Ngah Abdul Rahman said it was necessary to impose higher penalties on those who involved themselves in such activities.

In Kuala Lumpur, Umno Secretary-General Datuk Mustafa Jabar urged party leaders at branch and divisional levels to be wary of the presence of any extremist group acting suspiciously.

Datuk Mustafa said Umno strongly condemned the Batu Pahat incident which went against the teachings of Islam.

"Although we do not know for certain the motive for the attack, we can gather that they had acted violently and inconsiderately."

Datuk Mustafa this morning sent telegrams to those injured in the attack and their relatives.

In Penang, the State Gerakan condemned the attack by the religious fanatics.

"This act of violence, particularly on the police station, shows that the fanatics do not show any regard for the law," State Gerakan publicity chief Dr Tan Chong Teik said.

He said the Gerakan felt that such acts would cause chaos in Malaysia where there was multi-racialism.

Dr Tan said the Government should leave no stone unturned to investigate into the activities of religious fanatical groups.

In Kangar, the president of the Religious Affairs Council, Haji Ghazali bin Ismail, said Perlis was free of religious fanatic activities or wrong teachings of Islam.

"We have been able to curb wrong religious teachings following a tight check by the council since the Kerling incident in 1978," he added.