

Root cause of 'Memali'

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By **KHAIRUDDIN HASSAN**

— *by Dr Mahathir*

ALOR STAR, Fri. — Eighteen people died in Kampung Memali in Baling on Nov 19 because teachings contrary to Islam had aroused emotions to the point that the police were looked upon as infidels.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the West Malaysian National Union of Religious Teachers here today, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said:

"Ibrahim Mahmood or Ibrahim Libya might have been a highly-educated

person, but his teachings aroused the emotions of his followers who considered the police and the Government as infidels."

The people who attacked the police were ordinary kampung folk but be-

IBRAHIM TOLD FOLLOWERS THEY COULD NOT BE HURT: P2

cause of the teachings of their guru they were led astray.

The teachings were such that his followers thought they had supernatural powers or *ilmu kebal* and this was contrary to Islamic teachings.

The Prime Minister hoped the Baling

incident together with the one at Batu Pahat in which a police station was attacked would serve as a lesson to Muslims.

He reiterated that it never was the intention of the police to kill innocent people.

But when the police attempted to enter the house of Ibrahim Libya, the people within opened fire with shotguns.

No warning shots were fired by those within. "If it was the intention of the people within not to kill, surely they would have fired warning shots. Since there was no such warning it is clear they intended to kill the policemen," Dr

Mahathir said.

The Baling incident occurred because of those who gave wrong teachings and the blame should not be heaped on others.

Teachers are looked upon as leaders — and not only as those who merely teach pupils how to read.

A teacher is valued not just for his learning and knowledge but also for his aims and objectives.

The duties of religious teachers are heavier than those of ordinary teachers because religious teachings will have a greater bearing on children when they become adults.

Since the country attained independence, the Government has taken various measures to safeguard the position of Islam.

Dr Mahathir said many Muslims throughout the world were divided and were involved in bloody feuds because they had succumbed to such deviationist teachings.

"These wars occur be-

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Islam forbids killing of fellow Muslims'

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cause there are those, including the leaders of these countries, who propagate that killing in these feuds is permitted by the religion.

"But Islam has never taught its followers to kill one another."

The presence of such deviationist teachings is also obstructing the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) peace committee efforts to mediate between Iran and Iraq.

"I was supposed to leave for Jeddah tomorrow and proceed to Teheran the following day to help negotiate for peace between Iran and Iraq.

"But unfortunately, yesterday afternoon I was informed that the trip had been postponed because binding conditions have been imposed on the committee even before the negotiations could take place.

"These conditions only serve to make the trip meaningless."