

Net abused to spread different Quranic values

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This will confuse Muslims and result in loss of faith, says PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs: Some Internet users have been viciously using the facility to propagate Quranic interpretations which are different from the ones acceptable by Muslims, although they seem to be in line with Islamic teachings.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said initially, it will only create confusion among Muslims, but eventually it will result in a loss of faith.

"For instance, we are from the Sunni group, which holds to the school of Imam Shafie, so when they bring here teachings which are different from this, they will confuse us.

"This can easily be done, as we have seen that the use of the Internet to spread defamation is rampant these days. The same applies to interpretations of Islam."

Mahathir said this after officiating and delivering a keynote address at a national seminar on Islamic Development and the Threat of Devia-

tionist Teachings, at the Malaysian International Exhibition and Showroom (Mines) near here today.

Mahathir said it is difficult to identify those involved in Internet-abuse activities, as

they can use any name and quote all kinds of sources.

However, through international meetings, Malaysia has tried to have a stand among the international communities to curb Internet abuse.

Unfortunately, Mahathir said, at this time, most countries are not willing to act against abusers of the Internet, and therefore, the country is in a weak position.

Asked if there is less participation from the ulama in terms of Internet usage, he said it is not true, as the Internet is widely used by many people, including the ulama and politicians.

"Therefore, inevitably, people can have access not only to the good stuff, but also to negative ones."

He said the the main objective is to pit the Muslims against each other, so that they will remain weak due to their conflicting opinions.

"They will fight among themselves and try to topple the alleged un-Islamic government. All this will happen. Thus, ultimately, the agenda is political, be it from the Muslims or non-Muslims," Mahathir said.

He added that followers of deviationist teachings can be categorised as *asabiyah* (fanatics), because they tend to be fanatical towards their leaders to the extent of yielding everything for them.