

Dr Mahathir was in Kuala Lumpur during 1985 Memali incident, says Musa Hitam
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One of the longest-kept secrets surrounding the bloody Memali incident was laid bare last night: that the then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic) was in Malaysia when police forces killed Ibrahim Libya and his followers in a clash.

For decades, it was reported that his deputy Tun Musa Hitam took charge of the operations as home minister in 1985 because Dr Mahathir was in China for a visit.

The context of last night's revelation by Musa in Kota Baru is important because the then deputy prime minister's image took a major hit and he subsequently fell out with Dr Mahathir.

The Memali incident occurred at a remote village in Baling, Kedah, in November 1985.

A team of policemen laid siege to the village of about 400 people and where the late Ibrahim Mahmud, also known as Ibrahim Libya had been running a religious school.

The incident resulted in 14 civilian deaths and two police deaths.

During the incident, Dr Mahathir had reportedly been in China but Musa claimed that he was in fact in Malaysia at the time.

He made the revelation during a political discussion yesterday in Kota Baru, which was organised by the Kelantan government.

Also present at the discussion were PAS vice-president Datuk Husam Musa and moderator Professor Madya Datuk Dr Mohammad Agus Yusof.

When asked by Agus whether Dr Mahathir was in Kuala Lumpur during the incident, Musa said two to three days afterwards, he was still in the capital.

In response, Agus said in a shocked tone "Oh my God" as the media had consistently reported that Dr Mahathir was in China during the incident.

"Ok, my God, our God," Musa said in an amused tone in reply to Agus's reaction.

During the discussion, Musa said: "The darkest moment in my political career was Memali, I am being honest."

He said that was also what he told his friends in politics.

The Memali incident saw hundreds of people detained. All were later freed except for 36 who were detained under the Internal Security Act.

Following the Memali incident, Musa was blamed as he was reportedly the acting prime minister at that time.

Dr Mahathir was supposedly visiting China at the time.

Musa's shocking revelation will open up a new episode in the tragic incident.

PAS has described all those who died as martyrs.

Sultan of Kedah Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah also paid his respects at the graves of Ibrahim and his followers. – March 28, 2014.

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