

Musa says he assumes responsibility for Memali even though he wasn't acting PM
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Former deputy prime minister Tun Musa Hitam today clarified the events leading to his revelation that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was in Kuala Lumpur during the bloody Memali incident in the mid-1980s.

Musa said he assumed responsibility for the incident on November 19, 1985, despite the fact that he was not the acting prime minister then.

"I assume full responsibility for the event," Musa said in a statement today.

"On the day of the Memali incident, Dr Mahathir was in Kuala Lumpur and I was not the acting prime minister," he said.

Musa had revealed in a forum in Kota Baru last week that Dr Mahathir was in Malaysia when police forces killed Ibrahim Libya and his followers in a clash.

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.

Musa said he and the then acting inspector-general of police met Dr Mahathir on the same day police forces killed Ibrahim Libya and his followers in a clash and requested that Dr Mahathir delay his visit to China for three reasons.

These were: the incident was in Kedah, which is Dr Mahathir's home state; it involved Muslims; and by postponing his China trip, it showed Dr Mahathir prioritised and cared about an incident taking place in the country.

However, Musa said the former prime minister ignored their advice.

"I told him about my proposal to table the Memali incident in Parliament," he said today.

Musa said he also requested a 24-hour media embargo to assess the situation. He wanted to provide a more accurate picture of what transpired in Memali that day.

On November 20, 1985, Musa raised the issue in Parliament and held a press conference.

Musa said his statement today was not to reopen the Memali incident but to clarify what he had said about the incident in Kota Baru on March 27.

"The main issue now are the facts... whether on that day I was the acting prime minister when Dr Mahathir was overseas," Musa said, adding that based on the reference material that he has

unearthed, it was obvious that Dr Mahathir was in fact in Malaysia, which meant that Musa could not assume the role of acting prime minister. – April 4, 2014.

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