

DPM: My race riot remark manipulated
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Under fire for allegedly issuing a veiled threat of the recurrence of racial riots, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin now says his statement was manipulated.

Expressing regret in Kedah this evening, he said that he had merely expressed fear that such clashes could happen if all Malaysians do not preserve harmony.

He is also reported by Bernama as saying that it is not wrong to issue such reminders, which applies to both Malays and non-Malays.

"Several days ago I had expressed my fear on the possibility of communal clashes breaking out if we do not preserve peace, solidarity and cordial relations that exist between the races currently.

"There are certain people in Malaysia who do not understand what I say...(they) manipulate and in fact turn whatever I say into a political statement," he is quoted by the national newswire as saying.

"The reminder to preserve peace and harmony is a must. It is not only confined to the Malays but the whole community. The Muslims and non-Muslims have a common responsibility."

Muhyiddin was last Saturday quoted by Utusan Malaysia as saying that racial riots could recur in Malaysia, with the escalation of racial and religious tensions.

He also made reference to the May 13, 1969 bloody clashes, but declined to name the event.

This was seen by detractors as a veiled threat while his supporter, including Gerakan and MCA, say he was merely reminding Malaysians to safeguard peace.