

## **Don't let it happen again, PM tells IGP**

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**By Koh Jun Lin**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has instructed inspector-general of police Khalid Abu Bakar to ensure that the Low Yat Plaza incident yesterday does not recur.

He added that the incident should be seen as a criminal matter and not a racial issue.

"I have directed (Khalid) to take steps to curtail the Low Yat Plaza incident from repeating. This issue needs to be seen as a crime, not a racial problem," he Tweeted this evening.

At a separate press conference in Kuala Lumpur earlier today, he also chastised social media users who had misrepresented and played up the incident as a racial issue. This had gone to the extent where photos purported to be from the incident were uploaded to social media, but in reality the photos uploaded were completely unrelated.

He pledged action will be taken against those who break the law and urged members of the public to let police handle the matter and conduct its investigation.

He also assured police had the ability to maintain order and ensure justice was served in this case as well as others.

"I want to stress that in such incidents, the norm is to see it from the perspective of race – a crime becomes seen as an act or consideration that has racial elements.

"This should not happen in our country," he said.

### **'This is very bad'**

In a rare but brief question-and-answer session with the media, Najib said the rakyat should check the facts of the news they read and not to succumb to a mob mentality.

Meanwhile, when met at the sidelines of the function which Najib was attending, Federal Territories Minister Tengku Adnan Mansor claimed that he was present during the Low Yat Plaza incident and said it was unbecoming of Malaysians.

He said Malaysians should not have taken the law into their own hands.

"Whether it was theft or someone got a counterfeit product, the shopowner shouldn't have taken the matter into his own hands or even the guy who whacked him.

"They should have called the security guards (and) called the police to control him. The same thing with the Malay boys [...] why did you bring your friends to come and take revenge?"

"There is no more mutual understanding between us. This is very bad. Very bad for this country. I am very sad lah," he said.

Some 200 people had gathered outside Low Yat Plaza last night in response to a brawl inside the mall a day earlier. Six people were hurt and 18 people were arrested when the crowd turned violent.

According to police, the incident stemmed from the theft of a smartphone from a shop with shopkeepers from another shop helping to apprehend the suspect.

### **Not racial**

However, the suspect's accomplice, who was freed, later returned to the scene with his friends to exact revenge leading to the first brawl.

A video of which had gone viral on social media and the ensuing discussion turned racial, including claims that the incident was due to a disgruntled customer being cheated with a counterfeit phone.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Tajudin Mohd Isa has refuted there was any racial element in the case and said there is no evidence to suggest cheating either.

"This issue is being played up in social media as a racial issue, of Malays being attacked by the Chinese.

"But if you study the investigation, it's just a phone theft case," he said.

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