

## **Unverified news leads to climate of fear, says Najib**

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Spreading unverified news will lead to accusations that will sow discord and disharmony among the people, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has warned.

"For the sake of relations among the Malaysian people, spreading unverified news will lead to accusations, and these terrible accusations will lead to discord and disturb the harmony we have cultivated for so many years," Najib said in a blog post today.

He gave the example of the news about the explosion at a car park in Petaling Jaya on Monday, saying that it was initially rumoured to be a bomb explosion, but turned out to be a case of arson.

Such incidents are good reminders for everyone to be more careful about spreading news, especially those received through the social media and messaging applications, Najib said.

### **Our responsibility to verify**

"It is our responsibility to ensure that any news we receive is true and accurate," he said, citing a passage in the Quran which calls for the people to verify the truth of news.

Even though technology now makes it very easy to spread information, unfortunately, he lamented, many people do not care about verifying the truth of the news they spread.

The prime minister urged everyone to be more responsible about using the technology we have.

Unverified news will also create a "climate of fear" among the people and destroy the country's image internationally.

"The implications are huge, especially to our economy," he said.

Previously, Najib has also said the country's economic issues are due to falling oil prices globally.

Earlier today, Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak also advised people to use freedom of speech maturely and to differentiate news from opinion.

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