

## **Tensions reignited outside Low Yat Plaza in fresh violence, several injured**

**The Malaysian Insider**

**July 12, 2015**

**Oleh Muzliza Mustafa**

Tensions were reignited outside Low Yat Plaza in Kuala Lumpur just after midnight today when a fight broke out between two groups, just hours after police had earlier ordered a large group outside the plaza to disperse.

Fistfights broke out among members of both groups while helmets and other items were thrown at each other.

Several people, including media personnel, were reportedly injured in the incident.

Reporters at the scene also said that what sounded like several explosions were also heard.

A reporter from a vernacular press who was caught in the melee was also punched in the face.

Several more police patrol cars were despatched to the area.

All shops in the area, including 24-hour convenience stores, have shuttered up as one group chased the other group along Jalan Bukit Bintang.

Police have sent reinforcements who have stationed themselves along Jalan Bulan 1 and Jalan Bukit Bintang. More motorcycle unit police personnel were also seen arriving at the scene.

Police have ordered everyone, including media personnel to disperse, failing which, they were warned that they will be arrested.

One group was also overheard demanding to meet Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Tajuddin Md Isa.

Police then sent in four Federal Reserve Units and a water canon in Jalan Bukit Bintang.

The units began sweeping the area for the trouble-makers, making several arrests.

The drama at Low Yat Plaza began on Saturday when it was reported that a youth had visited a shop there to buy a Lenovo S860 handphone worth RM799.

The salesman who attended to the man later told The Star that when he turned away to get a free gift for the youth, the latter had escaped with the handphone.

A chase ensued and handphone dealers in another shop caught the suspect, assaulted him and handed him over to the police.

Yesterday, however, the suspected thief's friends barged into the plaza and attacked the store where the employees had helped in apprehending the suspect.

They were overpowered and thrown out of the plaza and later in the evening, some 200 people, some of them said to be from a Malay rights group Pekida, congregated at the plaza, forcing the authorities to order the businesses at the premises to close early.

Police, meanwhile, cordoned off the area and prevented the group from entering the building.

They were heard screaming derogatory and unsavoury remarks and appeared ready to charge into the premises when the management and authorities decided to close early.

Kuala Lumpur CID chief Datuk Zainuddin Ahmad had announced that the brawl last night was not racially motivated, but purely an act of revenge by a group of youths unhappy that one of their friends was arrested for allegedly stealing a mobile phone.

One of them, believed to be the group's representative, was heard telling the crowd that the gathering was about seeking justice.

"We want justice and fairness, let the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) be aware of what happened yesterday," he said.

Yesterday's incident went viral on social networking sites with many jumping to the conclusion that it was racially motivated.

The postings on social media also said that the man currently in police custody for alleged shoplifting had been conned when purchasing a mobile phone at the shop.

It was claimed that the man had snatched a unit from a salesman after the latter had refused to replace the mobile phone he bought earlier.

Police then ordered the crowd to disperse.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Tajuddin who was at the scene, once again urged the public not to speculate on what had happened and allow police to conduct their investigation of the case.

"We are going to investigate both parties thoroughly without any bias," Tajuddin had said.

The situation was thought to have been resolved when two hours later, a group of about more than 100, turned up and started attacking another group, which led to

chaos in downtown Kuala Lumpur.

As at midnight, police were still combing the surrounding area, looking for trouble-makers. – July 13, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/tensions-reignited-outside-low-yat-plaza-in-fresh-violence>