

**STATEMENT BY
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ON 5TH DECEMBER, 1967**

I am pleased to say that the security situation in West Malaysia has considerably improved during the last few days. There have been practically no major incident anywhere and it is confidently expected that the situation in affected areas in North Malaya will return to normal very soon. Curfews are slowly being relaxed and in a few days' time, it is expected to be taken off completely.

Ever since the incidents started in Penang, I have been having meetings with Police, Military and Civilian Officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Defence, and Information every morning at 9.00 o'clock to review the situation and to decide on action to be taken. As the situation is so improved, it is now decided that there will no longer be any such meetings from today. However, the Police and the Military will continue to patrol the affected areas and a search will continue to be made for some of those involved in the incidents who have not yet been arrested.

It is now the task of the State Governments, namely, the Menteri-Menteri Besar, Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament, elected Councillors, leaders of various communities, the District Officers, Goodwill Committees and others to continue to play their part in counteracting false rumours and in bringing the people together in the affected areas in particular, so that fears and suspicion are completely wiped out.

As already announced, the Government will take the strongest and firmest action against those responsible for the recent incidents. We have arrested about 1,700 people, including thugs and curfew breakers. The Police is examining into all these cases of persons arrested and those found responsible for these sets of violence will be dealt with strictly according to the law. Action will be taken to have non-citizens involved banished from the country, and for others who are citizens by Registration or Naturalization, action will be taken to deprive them of their citizenship. For these people, citizenship is a privilege granted by Government and by their acts they have shown to be disloyal to this country, they therefore do not deserve to continue to enjoy the privilege of citizenship. Since the outbreak of this violence, the Police and the Military have been working extremely hard for the last 12 days. They have been working day and night to maintain law and order and I would like on behalf of the Government and the people to pay my warmest tribute to the officers and men of the Police Force and also to the Military, including the volunteers, for the way in which they have carried out their duties under trying circumstances. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to those members of the public, Government servants, elected

Councillors and others, who have shown loyalty and courage by co-operating with the Government to bring an end to these shameful acts of violence and hooliganism.

The recent incidents have clearly shown the extent of damage to the country and miseries and sufferings to the people, particularly the poor, that action by irresponsible and disloyal small minority of the people could bring. While the Government will take firm and appropriate measures against those involved, it must be the determination of all loyal citizens of this country to see that these acts of violence would not recur and that peace, harmony and goodwill among our people of various races must be maintained and strengthened at all times.