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PM blames PAS for Kuala Terengganu riot

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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today blamed an opposition party for inciting a [riot](#) in Kuala Terengganu on Saturday night.

He said that the opposition could have prompted the riot after not being able to bring development to the state during the five years it was in power.



While he did not name the opposition party, it was evident that he was referring to PAS which had ruled the state from 1999 to 2004 before it was wrestled back by the BN.

Abdullah claimed that the rioting was a deliberate tactic by the opposition party.

"This is proof of their irresponsibility and are devoid of ideas to develop the state," he was quoted as saying by *Bernama* in Kuching, Sarawak.

The prime minister was also reported as saying that the opposition party had purposely intended to smear the BN government with the riot because they had no chance to win in the next general election.

Seven people were injured, two with gunshot wounds, in the riot which started following a police refusal for a ceramah to proceed.

The ceramah was organised by polls watchdog Bersih, which is a coalition made up opposition parties and NGOs to campaign for free and fair elections.

Opposition supporters openly clashed with police who were trying to disperse the gathering at Jalan Sultan Mahmud in Pantai Batu Buruk.

The riot was sparked when police ordered the crowd of 500 people to disperse peacefully.

The police claimed that they were verbally abused by the aggressive crowd, with stones, homemade bombs and Motolov cocktails being hurled at police.

Police have arrested 23 people in connection with the riot. The two men who were shot are still undergoing treatment in hospital.

The police have claimed that gunshots were fired in self-defence by a police personnel who was being attacked by a crowd.

No ISA for rioters

Abdullah, who is also Internal Security Minister, however, said police would not invoke the Internal Security Act against the rioters who have been detained but would deal with them under normal police



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procedures.



He said the incident, which saw the burning of the national flag, showed the opposition had bad intentions probably after seeing the people happy and grateful to the government as they ushered in the 50th

independence anniversary celebrations.

PAS however claimed that the violence which rocked the Kuala Terengganu ceramah was **instigated** by police agent provocateurs.

The opposition party also accused political secretary to Internal Security Minister Wan Mohd Farid Wan Salleh of having a hand in it.

However, Mohd Farid denied this when contacted later.



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