

Committee of Inquiry to probe Little India riot

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SINGAPORE - The Prime Minister on Monday ordered a Committee of Inquiry (COI) into the cause of the unrest in Little India, as police gave a detailed account of the previous night's fiery riot that left a nation stunned.

The bus driver involved in the fatal road accident that is believed to have sparked the violence has been arrested, and is facing a charge of causing death by a negligent act.

The 55-year-old driver, whose surname is Lim but is known as Ah Huat to friends, is out on bail, pending further investigations.

A total of 28 men, aged between 23 and 45, were arrested in relation to the rioting. Some 26 of them - 25 foreign and one Singapore permanent resident - were due to be charged with rioting on Tuesday. Two others were not involved in the fracas.

On Monday, eyewitnesses and police gave details of the events that led to the rioting by 400 people, who attacked first responders and set emergency vehicles on fire.

The descent into chaos apparently began over a bus ride. Construction worker Sakthivel Kumaravelu, 33, had tried to force his way on board a shuttle bus that was already full for a ride back to his dormitory in Tuas.

<http://www.asiaone.com/singapore/committee-inquiry-probe-little-india-riot>

The Indian national was told to step off the bus by a timekeeper, whose job was to keep track of the bus' arrival and departure times. He dropped his trousers before he staggered off the bus.

Police said preliminary investigations indicated he was drunk.

Eyewitnesses said that, soon after he got off, he fell onto the path of the bus and was run over.