

Charge ISA detainees or free them, kin urge gov't
Malaysiakini.com
November 24 ,2011

Family members of five persons detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) and an anti-ISA NGO have urged the prime minister in a memorandum today to either release their kin or put them on trial.

The five detainees are among 13 detained in Tawau, Sabah last week for alleged involvement in terrorism.

“Their families suffer as a result of losing their fathers and husbands without any reason.

“They bear the disgrace of the serious accusations without proof, and detentions without trial under ISA,” read the memorandum from the family members and the Abolish ISA Movement (GMI).

In the memo to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, they also demanded the premier prove his political will to end detentions without trial, including those under the Emergency Ordinance, Dangerous Drugs Act and any future legislation.

The group wants all ISA detainees to be compensated for their ordeal, and those who allegedly tortured them to be brought to justice.

In addition, they said Najib should draw up a long-term roadmap to review oppressive laws and deal with terrorism without affecting fundamental liberties and principles of justice.

They want the government to ratify the United Nations' International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Seven Malaysians and six foreigners were detained in the police operation between Nov 14 to 16.

According to GMI sources, those detained included tuition teachers, newspaper distributors and a lorry driver.

Inspector-general of police Ismail Omar said on Nov 17 that the arrests were made in connection with efforts to revive a militant movement in Sabah.

A motion to repeal the ISA would be tabled in March next year, according to Najib, following his promise to do so in a Sept 15 announcement.

Immediately after the arrests, GMI and human rights NGO Suaram had questioned the sincerity of the promises, saying that they were for “political expediency”.

However, Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein had previously confirmed there will still be detention without trial in laws replacing the ISA.