

**Manoharan: Detention under ISA was worth it**

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A lawyer who was arrested under the Internal Security Act for involvement in the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) has described his detention as 'worthwhile' because it has raised political awareness among Indian Malaysians.

temple demolition court case 260307 m manoharanSpeaking about his arrest on Dec 13, 2007, along with four others, M Manoharan said Indians, particularly the youth, have realised that each individual has a role to play in highlighting the community's plight.

"Many Indians took BN for granted. They now know they have been cheated. They woke up and became politically alert. I must thank them for supporting us through our arrest," Manoharan said in a telephone interview.

"They now know their rights and are finally brave enough to voice (their demands)."

Manoharan was able to win the Kota Alam Shah state assembly seat while held for four months at the Kamunting Detention Camp in Perak.

kota alam shah service centre 280608 service centreHis victory was due to the unprecedented number of volunteers and Hindraf supporters who campaigned for him.

The DAP had previously fielded him several times - unsuccessfully - in various seats.

Manoharan described his incarceration as a "very painful" experience but said he does not regret it.

"It was worth it. The only regret I have is right now, there is so much to do for the Indian community, and I am unable to do enough," he said.

'Najib had a hand in our arrest'

Manoharan said it was incumbent upon him and others in the Hindraf movement to continue their struggle

to help the Indian community because of the support they received during their detention.

hindraf klang court sedition 261107 supporter“They were with us all the way. They walked with us, carried us, went on fasts for us and prayed for us. Now it is my turn to give back as a state assemblyperson,” he said.

He believes that, over the past four years, there have been fewer police shootings and deaths in police custody, the two factors that sparked the Hindraf movement.

Manoharan urged Indians to remember that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was deputy premier at the time of the crackdown against Hindraf.

“He had a role in our arrest and in the persecution of Hindraf supporters,” he claimed.

He also warned the community that the federal government had yet to address long-standing issues that affect Indian Malaysians, such as laws on religious conversion and the preventive detention cases under the Emergency Ordinance.

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