

Hindraf lays conditions to stay out of GE13

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By Leven Woon

The Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) will stay out of the next general election should Pakatan Rakyat sign a pledge to resolve problems faced by the Indian poor.

Hindraf said Pakatan has until May 20 to sign the pledge involving, among others, land titles for Indian villages, temples and Tamil schools, and providing scholarship opportunities and low-cost housing.

padang chetty klang hindraf 220411 "If Pakatan gives us a written undertaking, then we will not contest in a single seat," Hindraf de facto leader P Uthayakumar said today.

He said that the issues faced by the Indian poor had been ignored by Pakatan in states which the coalition are now ruling.

He told this to reporters after a Hindraf rally in Padang Chetty, Klang that was attended by a 1,000 strong crowd.

The event was initially meant as a stage for PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim to address a crowd of Indian poor.

Hindraf had hoped that Anwar would spell out Pakatan's plans for the Indian poor, but he declined the invitation because the platform was "inappropriate".

Meanwhile, Hindraf said that it will announce its candidacy for three Parliamentary and four state legislative assembly seats - all in Selangor - on May 20 if their demands are not met.

Last resort

Uthayakumar told reporters later that this will do so as a "last resort" should there be no assurance for the Indian poor given by Pakatan.

Hindraf revealed that the four Parliamentary seats are Kota Raja (held by PAS), Kelana Jaya (PKR) and Kuala Selangor (PAS) while the four state seats are Sri Andalas (PKR), Seri Setia (PKR), Ijok (PKR) and Bukit Melawati (PKR).

padang chetty klang hindraf 220411 Asked if such plans would spoil Pakatan's chances of retaining the seats, Uthayakumar replied: "I don't think it will cause a dent. If we stand in all 222 (Parliamentary) seats, then yes".

Asked on why Hindraf has scaled down its target of 15 Parliamentary seats and 38 state legislative assembly seats nationwide, Uthayakumar conceded that doing so would stretch the movement too thin.

"When we went campaigning around the country, maybe because of prolonged BN suppression (of Indians), we did not successfully establish substantial footholds in every area," he said.

He added that Hindraf will again extend an invitation for the three top Pakatan leaders to attend another rally at the same venue on May 20.

"If Anwar feels the place is not conducive enough, we can go to his PKR office in Damansara," said Uthayakumar.

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