

## **Suhakam to meet ISA detainees on hunger strike**

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**By Aidila Razak**

The National Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) will be visiting the Kamunting detention centre on Friday to check on Internal Security Act detainees said to be on hunger strike for freedom.

Suhakam commissioner James Nayagam (left) said a three-member team will visit the detention centre to check on the well-being of the detainees.

“The purpose is to meet the detainees, get more information and the reasons for their strike so we can look into this. We are concerned about their well-being,” Nayagam said.

Suhakam will also ascertain just how many detainees are currently behind bars and how many are taking part in the strike as the details it has are sketchy.

“All we know right now is that there is a hunger strike,” he said.

Nayagam said that Suhakam had initially intended to make the visit today but put it off to Friday to make arrangements for the visit, and it had also to coordinate the visit with officers of the detention centre.

'Give them medical care, if needed'

“I will be holding a press conference in front of the centre at 11.30am and hope to be let in,” he said.

In the meantime, he urged wardens at the detention centre to provide the detainees with medical care, if needed, during their hunger strike.

Yesterday, human rights NGO Suaram said the hunger strike began four days ago.

“The detainees do not understand why they are still detained in Kamunting while the ISA has already been repealed. If the government has no evidence against the detainees, it should release them,” said Suaram.

Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein had earlier said that he needs time to decide whether to release the detainees or to charge them in court.

Though he did not disclose the number of people still being held under the ISA, Hishammuddin had said that all of them were detained for terrorism-related activities.

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