

Najib pact unimaginable, historic, says Waytha
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After years of accusing Umno of "ethnic cleansing" the Indian community, Hindraf leader P Waythamoorthy has defended his renewed friendship with the ruling party as "historic" by laying blame on Pakatan Rakyat.

Calling BN chief Najib Razak's surprise endorsement of the Hindraf blueprint yesterday "unimaginable", Waythamoorthy said it was not the group's agenda to seek a change in government but only to seek upliftment of the Indian community.

In a statement today, he said it did not matter if the country was ruled by "Ravana or Rama" (the demon and the god respectively in Hindu mythology).

"The Pakatan leadership has refused to sign this document, giving various self-serving and convenient reasons, whereas what BN has now done is to come forward to do something totally unprecedented," he said in a statement today.

Waythamoorthy's statement is reproduced below in full:

"The memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement between Hindraf and BN signed yesterday is a historic document that is set to impact the lives of more than 1.5 million Indians in the country. The new paradigm that the document will create addresses the longstanding charges of unequal treatment of the Indian minority in the country.

"For the first time in the history of the country the almost 800,000 displaced estate workers are recognised as a deprived category in our population. This recognition has resulted in BN endorsing the Hindraf Blueprint in large part by establishing a program to uplift these workers.

"The elements of the program agreed upon are sweeping in scope which when realized will permanently address the poverty trap that many poor Indian families face today.

"The BN government, in signing up to the Hindraf proposals has also accepted its lapses over the last 50 odd years in its policies. The (incumbent) prime minister repeated his apology to the Indians in the country for this lapse in their past policies and added that, that was the reason for them to decide to work with Hindraf to address the problem in a comprehensive and permanent manner.

"To many this may appear to be odd, to say the least, but we wish to remind that Hindraf has always been consistent on its stand to find permanent and comprehensive solutions to the 56 years of neglect of the Indian community.

"The Pakatan leadership has refused to sign this document, giving various self-serving and convenient reasons, whereas what BN has now done is to come forward to do something totally unprecedented - apologising to the Indians for the past and attempting to make real amends for those lapses.

"Signing up a binding memorandum by BN was unimaginable to most, till yesterday and that is why we say this is a historic event for the poor and the underclass.

"Hindraf's struggle is not to seek change in the faces of the leadership and who rules this country. It does not make a difference to the poor and underclass Indians whether it's Ravana or Rama (as in Indian mythology) who rules this country when their daily lives are nothing more than a struggle.

"We are now confident, that with this program of upliftment the plight of the Indians will be resolved in time.

"The event yesterday saw a culmination to a process that began in August last year with Hindraf's call to both the coalitions for comprehensive and permanent solutions to the problem.

"This deal between Hindraf and BN was therefore not made yesterday, it was made when the deal was offered to both the coalitions. Pakatan did not endorse the proposals in the binding way expected. BN did.

"And now we call on all Indians in the country to throw their support behind BN."

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