

Hindraf report card gives red marks for MOU progress

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A hundred days after its chairperson P Waythamoorthy joined the federal government, Persatuan Hindraf Malaysia says it has made progress in only one of 32 areas of its agreement with BN: to set up a new unit under the Prime Minister's Department.

Even then, Waythamoorthy as a deputy minister has little real power, reads the NGO's 100-day report card released today.

NONE"The performance in the areas of devolution of full executive authority to the unit head (Waythamoorthy), the allocation of the budgets for 2013, in defining the organisation structure for the unit, in the set-up of the expert steering committee and in the planning for the Budget 2014 are all unsatisfactory," it said.

It added that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had to attend to all of the unit's affairs since the unit could not operate independently, which in turn meant its affairs are stalled because his time is limited.

Further hampering its efforts is that it has yet for form an Expert Steering Committee (ESC), which the report says will delay many other aspects of the blueprint.

"The two members from the Hindraf side have been identified for this committee, (but we are still) waiting for the government's side for identification of the chairperson and two committee members," it said.

Among the issues stalled by the ESC delay include the setting-up of a subcommittee to deal with issues related to temples and burial grounds, and conducting of studies to resolve a myriad of issues such as displaced estate workers and the provision of skills programmes and housing.

Nine activities deemed feasible

The setting-up of the committee is deemed to one of nine initiatives that it deemed feasible in the first 100 days.

It expressed concern that unless this is rectified soon, the committee would not be able to provide input to the Budget 2014 planners for its implementation plans.

"The Budget 2014 planning cycle has begun. Unless the committee gets to work very soon, it is likely that the budget input for the implementation plan may be in jeopardy.

"In addition, this plan drives the infrastructure set-up for the unit and several activities in the plan. This is a major bottleneck for the plan at this stage," it said.

In addition, it said it has already proposed a budget and an organisational structure for Waythamoorthy's unit. However, the former is yet to be approved, while the latter has been rejected for being "too elaborate".

The report card tracks the progress in 32 performance areas in the implementation of Persatuan Hindraf Malaysia's 32-point MOU with BN from June 5, when Waythamoorthy was sworn into office, up to Sept 12.

After courting Pakatan Rakyat for months leading up to the last general election, Persatuan Hindraf Malaysia made an about-turn on April 18 by signing what it called a "historic" memorandum of understanding (MOU) with BN.

NONEWaythamoorthy then urged the Indian community to throw its support behind BN in the election and was made a senator and roped into Prime Minister Najib Razak's administration after May 5.

The eight-page report concludes with a large blue 'frownie' (a frowning face) under the heading "Overall performance rating for this report period".

"Our performance in this period is certainly unsatisfactory, but we believe this has much to do with the learning curve involved of this unprecedented effort deriving from the agreement.

"We believe that performance will certainly pick up with the approaches we are taking or planning to take," the report said.

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