

Hindraf: BN using Mah to hoodwink Indians
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Appointing Gerakan president Mah Siew Keong as the minister to oversee Hindu affairs body is a ruse to fool the Indian community, says Persatuan Hindraf Malaysia (PHM).

PHM's deputy chairperson K Tamilselvan said appointing Mah to oversee the national Hindu Endowment Board was "another attempt by the Barisan Nasional to hoodwink the Indians into believing that the government would be fulfilling its nambikei promises".

"While Persatuan Hindraf is not objectionable to the appointment of a Chinese candidate, we cannot ignore the fact that the BN government itself has lost all hope in MIC and its affiliated foundations and NGOs to serve the Indian community.

"The prime minister has to answer the pertinent question as to why he and his cabinet did not set up the promised 'unit' within his PMO with the necessary budget, as per the agreement in the (Hindraf memorandum of understanding) MOU?

"Isn't his government trying to short-change the Indians?" Tamilselvan asked in a statement today.

On the cusp of the last general election, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak made a public show of signing the MOU with PHM, which PHM then boasted would definitively solve the problems the Indian community were facing.

In return, PHM went on a nationwide campaign to garner electoral support for BN.

PHM's chief P Waythamoorthy was subsequently appointed a minister in the Prime Minister's Department to look into the community's affairs, after BN won the general election.

However PHM claimed the actions outlined in the MOU did not materialise and Waythamoorthy quit his post of deputy minister after eight months.

Mah covering for MIC's failures

Tamilselvan said Mah's appointment was part of the government's plan to put on a show that the areas covered in the MOU were being addressed.

"Isn't it not surprising that after Waythamoorthy resigned, Najib hastily called on the four Indian leaders in the cabinet and assigned each of them a task in the (areas mentioned in the MOU) to overcome public criticism on its non-fulfillment of election promises signed

with PHM?

"Whatever happened to those assignments? It is a known fact the four MIC leaders in the cabinet are lame ducks who would continue to eyewash the public," he said.

Mah, he said, had to take on the given role out of MIC's failure, "in the desperate hope to show something is being done to uplift the Indians".

This week Penang Hindu Endowment Board chairman P Ramasamy slammed Mah's appointment as an "insult" to the Indian community that none from the MIC could be chosen to take on the role.

While Gerakan Youth chief Tan Keng Liang ticked Ramasamy off for racialising the issue, its Wanita secretary-general B Jayanthi said it was because Mah enjoys "tremendous support" from his Indian electorate.

Mah knows well enough the problems of the Indian community as he has 19 percent Indian voters in his Teluk Intan, she said in a statement yesterday.

Jayanthi hailed Mah's appointment as "unprecedented" and "confirms us as the people's movement party as we don't divide and rule".

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