

**Ex-ISA detainee Vasantha arrested at Najib's launch**  
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Former ISA detainee K Vasanthakumar was arrested today while attempting to hand over a memorandum on the plight of Indian Malaysians to Prime Minister Najib Razak at a private function.

K Vasanthakumar arrested at Najib's launchThe activist, along with 10 others, was trying to approach the premier, who was on his way out after passing out 50 scholarships to Indian students, the result of collaboration between the Sri Murugan Centre and the 1Malaysia Development Berhad in Brickfields this afternoon.

The group was, however, held back by scores of police officers, who had formed a human wall along Najib's passage to his waiting car.

K Vasanthakumar arrested at Najib's launchVasanthakumar was subsequently dragged away (above and right) when he started shouting "more JPA scholarships for Indians".

He was shoved into a police van which then sped off, presumably to a police station.

Enraged, his supporters - including PKR Port Dickson assemblyperson M Ravi - later told reporters that Najib has discriminated against them.

"Why can't we just hand over a simple memorandum? The police had promised that we can shake hands and give the memorandum, but we were stopped," said Ravi.

"So what is the point of inviting us here? So that we can just make up the numbers and see his face? If I want to see his face so much, I can just open the newspapers. This talk of 'People First' is not reflective (of what transpired) today," he added.

Ravi later explained that before the incident they had handed over a copy of the memorandum to a Najib aide and were outside the hall waiting for the PM to exit so that they could pass one to him.

"(The aide) told us then that we had a minute to have a quick word with him. But now, we can't even shake hands with him," he said.

'Stop 1Malaysia perjury'

PKR Port Dickson assemblyperson M Ravi holding memo - K Vasanthakumar arrested at Najib's launchThe PKR assemblyperson also revealed that Vasanthakumar was held at the Brickfields district police headquarters.

"We met the district police chief, he also said that it was no big deal," said Ravi (left).

The police released Vasanthakumar at around 3.15pm.

The group said that they were not affiliated to any party or NGO, but were merely individuals concerned with the plight of marginalised Indians.

Their memorandum, signed by Vasanthakumar, called for more Public Service Department

scholarships for Indians, as well as more matriculation seats.

"Stop the Malaysia perjury that fools the poor Malaysian Indians. Such ideas are not practical; instead it does injustice to them," it said.

K Vasanthakumar arrested at Najib's launch "Malaysian Indians are giving the PM a three-day deadline to increase the number of scholarships and matriculation seats."

Vasanthakumar (left) was among the five Hindraf activists arrested in 2007 for organising a mammoth rally in the streets of Kuala Lumpur.

He was released in May last year along with two others - P Uthayakumar and M Manoharan - after spending almost two years in detention.

Nazri slams Rajaretinam

Meanwhile, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Aziz has accused Federation of Malaysian Indian Organisations president A Rajaretinam of lying in questioning the awarding of scholarships by the Public Service Department (JPA).

According to Bernama, Nazri said Rajeretinam's claims that Indians were sidelined in the awarding of the scholarships were not true.

"To me, this is a lie with ulterior motives, to influence non-Malays to be angry with the government," he told reporters in Kelantan today.

Yesterday, a local English daily had published a report which had attributed Rajaretinam as saying that the scholarships were not being awarded fairly to the various ethnic groups in the country.

Mohd Nazri stressed that the scholarships were being awarded on a 56:44 ratio (Malays/non-Malays) and as such, advised Rajeretinam to stop making racially-sensitive statements.

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