

Tharmendran: Guarantee of safety sought
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Protesters are scheduled to head for the Defence Ministry headquarters in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow morning, demanding a guarantee of safety for ex-airman N Tharmendran.

ahmad zahid hamidiThe group wants Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (left) to give a written guarantee that Tharmendran, who has been charged in connection with the theft of two jet-fighter engines, will not be harassed by air force officers.

His father N Nagarajah and team of lawyers led by N Surendran are expected to hand over a note of demand to Ahmad Zahid, in the hope of securing the guarantee.

hindraf probed by police 141008 surendranSurendran (right) said he has faxed a note to Ahmad Zahid's office this morning.

"The moment we get his written undertaking, we will proceed to secure Tharmendran's release from Sungai Buloh (prison)," he said when contacted.

Opposition politicians and NGO representatives are expected to join the protest.

Jail safer

On Monday, Tharmendran made an unprecedented decision to retract bail for fear of being picked up by air force officers who were waiting outside the PJ Sessions Court, where the trial had been scheduled to start.

He chose to return to the Sungai Buloh prison after his defence team failed to get a protection order from the court to protect him from possible "abduction" by the RMAF.

The former RMAF sergeant had earlier claimed that he had been tortured while in custody of the armed forces last year, during an internal probe into the theft of the jet engines.

Tharmendran is jointly charged, along with company director K Rajandran Prasad, with the theft of the F-5E engines at the air movement section of the Subang air force base in December 2007.

He faces another charge of abetment for allegedly collaborating with senior airman Mohamad Shukri Mohamad Yusop to steal the engines from the Sungai Besi air force base.

Mohamad Shukir, however, has not been charged and is likely to be one of the main prosecution witnesses.

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