

**Lim : PM didn't get the people's message**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Mar 29, 2008**

The government's refusal to release the five Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) leaders detained under the Internal Security Act is proof that the administration has not heard the "message" of the people in the March 8 political tsunami. MCPX

syed hamid albarThis was the view of DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang who criticised Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar for denying the five - P Uthayakumar, V Ganabatirau, K Vasantha Kumar, R Kengadharan, and M Manoharan - their freedom.

"Hamid's explanation is completely unacceptable. (His refusal shows) that the second (Prime Minister) Abdullah (Ahmad Badawi) administration has not really heard the voice of the people in the March 8 political tsunami for change towards a more democratic, accountable, just and progressive Malaysian society," he said in a statement.

On Friday, Hamid said the government cannot simply react to political parties' call in releasing Manoharan who won the Kota Alam Shah state seat by a 7,184-vote majority over incumbent Ching Su Chen of Barisan Nasional.

"We have to react towards what is public safety and peace and will make due considerations if there is no threat to national security," he reportedly said.

**No proof of links**

Lim commented that Hamid's reluctance to release the detainees is because the ISA detention of the Hindraf quintet last December, was the result of calls by Barisan Nasional component parties and had nothing whatsoever to do with national security.

After the Hindraf rally on Nov 25, the five were subjected to a slew of charges for sedition and illegal assembly. They were eventually detained for being linked to terrorist organisations.

lim kit siang dap pc 130208 seriousHowever the police or the PM has yet to disclose any proof of these links.

"Having myself being detained twice for a total of 35 months under the ISA, I can vouch that ISA detentions had been used as political instruments to suppress dissent which have no relationship whatsoever with national security," the DAP stalwart asserted.

In 1969, Lim was detained under the ISA for 18 months. He was again victim to ISA during Operation Lalang in 1987 and was held without trial for 17 months.

Lim also said that releasing the Hindraf five will serve as a litmus test whether BN component parties will speak up against the arrogant, undemocratic and unjust policies and attitudes forced on them by Umno Ministers and leaders.

"Let the immediate and unconditional release of the Manoharan and the other four Hindraf leaders from ISA detention be the first test of MCA, MIC and Gerakan post-March 8 political tsunami.

"Firstly, whether the MCA, Gerakan and MIC ministers and deputy ministers are prepared to ask the Cabinet next Wednesday to end the ISA abuse and detention of the five Hindraf leaders.

"Secondly, whether MCA, Gerakan and MIC national leadership are prepared to submit a joint memorandum to the prime minister for the immediate and unconditional release of the Hindraf five from ISA," he challenged.

### **Cabinet stonewall**

The Ipoh Timor parliamentarian also criticised the first Cabinet meeting last Wednesday for creating all-round national disappointment as there were no positive indications that the second Abdullah administration would be a reformist one.

"Proposals for far-reaching judicial reforms to address the two-decade long subversion of the independence, integrity and quality of the judiciary came up against a stonewall in the Cabinet," he said.

zaid ibrahim"Even the unsatisfactory and inadequate proposal by the de facto law minister Zaid Ibrahim that the government should apologise to the judges who were victims of the 1988 judicial crisis could find no acceptance," he added.

Last week, Zaid mooted the idea that the government needed to apologise to former Lord President Salleh Abas and other Supreme Court judges who were sacked in the fallout of the 1988 judicial crisis.

However, the minister and reformist lawyer said the cabinet was still considering it and it was speculated that his view had been rejected by the rest of his colleagues during the cabinet meeting.