

Samy meets Syed Hamid on Hindraf 5 release
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Chan Kok Leong

Samy Vellu, who called for the release of the five detainees on Sunday, met Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar this afternoon to discuss their release.

samy vellu pc 120308 stern "We understand that the five were detained to preserve the security of the country but now after more than four months, we hope that the government will reconsider their detention," said Samy Vellu.

"The Home Minister said that they will have to seek the police's view on this before reconsidering and that he (Syed Hamid) cannot decide unilaterally."

The 72-year-old said MIC will leave it to the minister to sort it out and take the appropriate action.

Samy Vellu also said that he would not be raising the issue with Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi because the matter was under the home minister's purview and not the prime minister's anymore.

The Federal Court is currently hearing an appeal against the Kuala Lumpur High Court decision in February to reject a habeas corpus application by the five Hindraf leaders.

On Dec 13 last year, P Uthayakumar, M Manoharan, V Ganabathirai, R Kengadharan and K Vasanthakumar - dubbed as the Hindraf 5 - were detained under Section 8(1) of the Internal Security Act 1960 for two years.

Following this, the five filed a habeas corpus application to the Kuala Lumpur High Court on grounds that their detention was illegal and unconstitutional.

However, High Court judicial commissioner Zainal Azman Ab Aziz on Feb 26 ruled that the detention orders issued by Abdullah were valid.

The three-member Federal Court panel consists of Chief Judge of Malaya Alauddin Mohd Sheriff, Arifin Zakaria and Hashim Yusoff.

They are detained for allegedly being a threat to the national security.

More Hindu priests from India

Apart from the release of Hindraf 5, Samy Vellu also raised the issue of allowing more Hindu priests from India to work here.

samy meet syed hamid on release hindraf isa 030408 According to the former works minister, there are currently 500 Hindu priests from India working in Malaysia on contract but there are 26,000 temples here.

Furthermore, since early this year most of the work permits were not renewed, he told reporters at the Home Ministry today.

"These priests from India have their specialities and we must have them. The home minister has assured us that the matter will be brought to the attention of the cabinet," said Samy Vellu.

During the hour-long meeting, the issue of de-registration of two Hindu temples (Subramaniam and Mariaman) in Ipoh was also raised.

"There was some internal conflict there and complaints were filed with the Register of Societies. As a result of that, the two temples were de-registered," said Samy Vellu.

"I've asked Syed Hamid to consider lifting the de-registration."

Also present in the meeting were MIC secretary general Dr S Subramaniam and central working committee member SK Devamany.

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