

PM told to do one last deed - free all ISA detainees
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has the opportunity to do one last good deed before he relinquishes office - by releasing all those held under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

P Waythamoorthy (left), who heads the now-banned Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf), made the call in the wake of Abdullah's farewell speech at the 59th Umno general assembly over the weekend.

Waythamoorthy, who is living in self-imposed exile in London, noted in a statement that Abdullah had magnanimously acknowledged his shortcomings and that "Hindraf appreciates (this)".

"There are currently over 65 ISA detainees with some (having been held) for more than six years... without any particular reason except for national security," he said.

"Therefor we urge the (prime minister to) unconditionally release all the detainees as his one last good deed before his leaves the public office."

Waythamoorthy's brother Uthayakumar (left), is one of five Hindraf leaders detained since December 2007, shortly after a mammoth protest which saw some 30,000 Indian Malaysians taking to the streets of Kuala Lumpur in protest against discrimination and marginalisation.

Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar has justified the detention of the Hindraf 5, saying they pose a threat to national security.

All five have denied any wrongdoing and have unsuccessfully attempted to secure their release through the courts. Appeals via family members to the King, Abdullah and the home minister have gone unanswered.

MIC president S Samy Vellu has also appealed on their behalf, arguing that the five do not pose any threat to national security.

"The government should not hold them any longer as it will prolong the Indian community's ill-feelings towards the government," he noted.

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