

GE13: Hindraf awaits outcome of meeting with PM
The Star Online
March 25, 2013
By WANI MUTHIAH

PETALING JAYA: The outcome of a meeting between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and a Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) team Monday is being eagerly awaited by the movement's members.

The three-member Hindraf team will comprise the movement's chairman P. Waythamoorthy, his deputy W. Sambulingam and adviser N. Ganesan.

Waythamoorthy, who is currently on a hunger strike to force Barisan Nasional or Pakatan Rakyat to support Hindraf's blueprint for the betterment of the poorer segment of the Indian community, has been quoted as saying that he will discuss the plan with Najib.

MIC central working committee member K.P. Samy said Najib would have consented to the meeting on humanitarian grounds.

"Waythamoorthy is on a hunger strike and the right thing to do is to hear him out," said Samy, who visited the Hindraf leader last week.

He added that most of the points in the blueprint were identical to what the Barisan government had already implemented for the Indians.

"These have already been addressed and the Indian community is already benefiting from the implementation," said Samy.

Meanwhile, a member of a non-governmental organisation representing the Indian community said Najib was meeting Waythamoorthy because Hindraf still wielded influence amongst the grassroots Indians.

"Both Pakatan and Barisan need the support of the grassroots Indians for the upcoming election and that is what this dialogue is all about," said spokesman who declined to be named.

He said PAS was also worried over Najib's overtures to Hindraf as the Islamist party had depended on the Hindu fundamentalist group to win Indian votes.

Apart from Kota Raja, which PAS won with a huge majority in the 2008 general election, the Islamist party won marginally in places where there was a good percentage of Indians.

"The marginal win was due to the Indian votes. PAS is worried it will lose these votes if Hindraf succumbs to Barisan," he added.

Waythamoorthy's brother P. Uthayakumar is also said to be preparing to contest in the election under a PAS ticket in the Kota Raja parliamentary constituency, which is currently held by the party's Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud.

When contacted, Uthayakumar said he had met PAS leaders early last year and its president Datuk Seri Hadi Awang had said the party was prepared to field non-Muslim candidates under its ticket.

"We are taking his offer and asking him to field me in Kota Raja under the PAS ticket.

"I will be representing Hindraf, which is registered now, in the elections," added Uthayakumar.

He said he had yet to speak with PAS officials on the matter but was confident the party would agree to his candidacy under its ticket in Kota Raja.

Selangor PAS commissioner Dr Abd Rani Osman was not available for comment.

In 2008, Dr Siti Mariah garnered 38,630 votes (67%) against MIC's S. Vigneswaran, who received 17,879 votes (31%).

Copyright © 1995-2013 Star Publications (M) Bhd (Co No 10894-D)

Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2013/3/25/nation/20130325124012&sec=nation>