

Najib puts Waythamoorthy in his place
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak (pic) today rebuked P. Waythamoorthy, telling him that he had to toe the official line as he is a member of the administration.

"As a member of the government, you must toe the line, you must have one voice," he said at a press conference in his office in Putrajaya.

The PM's rebuke follows the criticism the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department received from three members of the Cabinet - Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, and Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin - for questioning the police's shooting of five gang members in Penang last week.

All had advised him to either toe the government line or quit.

Waythamoorthy, the former leader of Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf), rejected the calls to quit but also said he would not be silent on issues.

"I cannot be a disinterested observer on the sidelines just because I am in government," he has said.

Waythamoorthy, explaining the reason he spoke out, said the shooting may have resulted in the five being taken off the streets but it did nothing to solve rising crime.

He noted that at the funeral of one of those who died that day, newspapers reported that about 800 Indian youths, many purportedly 04 gang members, were in the procession.

He added that it was also reported that the director of criminal investigations (CID) Bukit Aman, Hadi Ho Abdullah, said police records of known gang members revealed that 71% were Indians.

In April, Waythamoorthy, on behalf of Hindraf, signed a 5-year blueprint with the government aimed at bringing the Indian poor into the mainstream of national development.

"When realised, it will certainly help wean these wayward Indian youth from crime and into productive economic activity. That will really be a win-win approach. I have chosen to come into government primarily for this purpose," he said.

He pointed to a study done by ACP Amar Singh Sidhu titled "The Rise of Crime in Malaysia", which said the main cause of the violent crime and gang-related activities was urban poverty. - August 29, 2013.

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