

Hindraf: Najib's blueprint for Indians an "April fool's trick"
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Waythamoorthy casts doubt on latest initiative as BN government failed to deliver promises in the MOU for Indian upliftment signed with Hindraf in 2013.

PETALING JAYA: Indian rights NGO Hindraf has dismissed Prime Minister Najib Razak's announcement in Chennai of a new blueprint to benefit the Indian community as an "April fool's trick."

Its chairman P Waythamoorthy said Najib had failed to fulfil a memorandum of understanding for the betterment of the community that Barisan Nasional (BN) had made with Hindraf, despite the document being publicly signed before "millions of Malaysians" through the media in April 2013.

"This is another attempt by Najib to dupe and give false hope and promises to the marginalised Malaysian Indian community," he said in a statement today.

"His act of announcing a new national blueprint for Indians is disgraceful and an insult to the intelligence of ordinary Malaysian Indians."

He said Najib, who is BN chairman, did not make good the agreement to implement RM4.2 billion worth of development programmes for the marginalised, especially some 800,000 Indians displaced from estates.

He noted that after the General Election in May 2013 Najib had appointed him to the Senate and as a deputy minister to carry out the programmes with the promise of a unit with full executive powers under his office.

"But after eight months I realised he was just hoodwinking the Malaysian Indians with empty promises that help was on the way through the Hindraf blueprint," he said.

"I warned him many times that I would resign from all positions if he does not fulfil his promises. He kept giving me empty promises and ultimately I took the principled stand of resigning."

Waytha said Najib "panicked" after his resignation and two months later announced the formation of the Socio-Economic Development of Indian Community unit (Sedic) headed by a university academic.

He claimed that most of the NGOs involved were MIC and Barisan Nasional (BN)-linked organisations, with no mechanism to check the allocations of RM100 million or so.

Najib, who is on an official visit to India, announced earlier that the new blueprint would be launched next month. He said a machinery or secretariat would be formed for the initiatives under the blueprint to be executed effectively.

“Najib believes Indians are fools who would be happy if few thousand ringgits are thrown at them,” Waytha said.

“Najib takes the view that Indian NGO leaders can be pacified with funds for their organisations which in turn would camouflage his failures to carry our real programs for the community under the National Development Policy.”

He also criticised MIC, saying the party seems to be “stealing” the idea of Hindraf’s blueprint after having failed the community for 60 years.

Stressing that Indians have been side-lined from the mainstream development of the country, he said the community should be placed in national economic programmes.

He also said the World Bank has recommended for the needs of the displaced 800,000 Indians from estates to be met.

On April 18, 2013 Waytha had signed the MOU to improve the lot of the Indians with Barisan secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor and witnessed by Najib.

He tendered his resignation from all positions in the government and the Senate, effective Feb 10, 2014, citing the BN government’s failure to deliver the promises of the MOU.

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