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Malaysia crackdown on ethnic Indians

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14th December, 2007

THE ARTICLE

The Malaysian government is getting tough with ethnic Indians who are complaining about racial discrimination. Indians make up around eight percent of Malaysia's population of 27 million people, but community leaders say they do not enjoy the same rights as Malays and Chinese. Police arrested five activists from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) on Thursday. The five are being held under the controversial Internal Security Act, which allows for detention without trial. Hindraf member S. Jayathas told the Associated Free Press news agency that: "Regardless of the arrests, this struggle will move on. We have many leaders who are waiting to take over and we will not go backwards, but move ahead with the fight for the rights of Indians in Malaysia."

Malaysia has been rocked in recent weeks by ethnic tensions. Public protests and marches are taking place in the streets and police are reacting violently, using tear gas, water canons and baton charges. Hundreds of Indians have been injured. The demonstrations are the biggest in Malaysia in over a decade and the government fears ethnic unrest in this usually peaceful, multiracial country. Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharom told The Associated Press: "This action is necessary because they [the Indians] have been causing a lot of problems for the public." Hindraf is demanding equality and fair treatment for Indians. It says Malaysia gives unfair, preferential treatment to Muslim Malays, which means Indians are being held back in business, jobs and education.

WARM-UPS

1. MALAYSIA: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Malaysia. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

getting tough / racial discrimination / community leaders / struggle / rights / ethnic tensions / public protests / tear gas / multiracialism / being held back

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: Talk to your partner(s) about racial discrimination. Does it exist in the following? What could you do to reduce it?

- your mind
- your friends
- people you know at school or work
- family members
- your school / company
- your town
- your country
- your country's institutions

4. NEIGHBOURLINESS: Are you a good neighbour? With your partner(s), talk about the neighbourliness of the following:

- ___ you and your classmate
- ___ you and the people who live next door to you
- ___ you and other people who live in the same street / apartment building
- ___ your town and the town next to yours
- ___ your continent and the continent nearest to yours

5. RACIAL TENSION: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with racial tension'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A **strongly** believes that one day, we will all look the same and no one will know our racial background and then the world will be at peace; Student B believes this will never happen. Change partners often. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Malaysian Indians are angry at being discriminated against. | T / F |
| b. Ethnic Indians form almost 27% of Malaysia's population. | T / F |
| c. Five Hindu activists are on the run and are being chased by police. | T / F |
| d. An Indian said the struggle for Indian rights is getting weaker. | T / F |
| e. The Malaysian police have used force to crack down on protestors. | T / F |
| f. Demonstrations are the biggest ever seen in Malaysia. | T / F |
| g. A security spokesperson said the crackdown was necessary. | T / F |
| h. Hindus say they get a poor deal when it comes to schools and jobs. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. tough | a. custody |
| 2. make up | b. have |
| 3. enjoy | c. racial |
| 4. detention | d. trouble |
| 5. regardless of | e. strict |
| 6. ethnic | f. restricted |
| 7. reacting | g. ignoring |
| 8. unrest | h. constitute |
| 9. preferential | i. responding |
| 10. held back | j. special |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Indians who are complaining about racial | a. same rights |
| 2. Indians make up | b. multiracial country |
| 3. leaders say they do not enjoy the | c. move on |
| 4. detention without | d. rocked in recent weeks |
| 5. this struggle will | e. back in business |
| 6. Malaysia has been | f. treatment |
| 7. unrest in this usually peaceful, | g. discrimination |
| 8. demanding equality | h. trial |
| 9. preferential | i. around eight percent |
| 10. Indians are being held | j. and fair treatment |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The Malaysian government is _____ tough with ethnic Indians who are complaining about racial discrimination. Indians _____ up around eight percent of Malaysia's population of 27 million people, but community leaders say they do not _____ the same rights as Malays and Chinese. Police arrested five activists from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) on Thursday. The _____ are being held _____ the controversial Internal Security Act, which allows for detention _____ trial. Hindraf member S. Jayathas told the Associated Free Press news agency that: "Regardless of the arrests, this _____ will move on. We have many leaders who are waiting to take over and we will not go backwards, but move ahead with the fight for the _____ of Indians in Malaysia."

make
struggle
enjoy
rights
getting
under
five
without

Malaysia has been _____ in recent weeks by ethnic tensions. Public protests and marches are taking place in the streets and police are reacting violently, using _____ gas, water canons and baton _____. Hundreds of Indians have been injured. The demonstrations are the biggest in Malaysia in over a decade and the government _____ ethnic unrest in this _____ peaceful, multiracial country. Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharom told The Associated Press: "This action is necessary because they [the Indians] have been _____ a lot of problems for the public." Hindraf is demanding equality and fair treatment for Indians. It says Malaysia gives _____, preferential treatment to Muslim Malays, which means Indians are being held _____ in business, jobs and education.

causing
charges
tear
usually
fears
back
rocked
unfair

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The Malaysian government is _____ ethnic Indians who are complaining about racial discrimination. _____ eight percent of Malaysia's population of 27 million people, but community leaders say they do not _____ rights as Malays and Chinese. Police arrested five activists from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) on Thursday. The five are _____ controversial Internal Security Act, which allows for detention without trial. Hindraf member S. Jayathas told the Associated Free Press news agency that: "_____ arrests, this struggle will move on. We have many leaders who are waiting to take over and we will not go backwards, but move ahead with _____ Indians in Malaysia."

Malaysia has _____ weeks by ethnic tensions. Public protests and marches are taking place in the streets and police are reacting violently, _____ canons and baton charges. Hundreds of Indians have been injured. The demonstrations are the biggest in Malaysia in over a decade and the government _____ this usually peaceful, multiracial country. Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharom told The Associated Press: "This _____ they [the Indians] have been causing a lot of problems for the public." Hindraf is demanding _____ treatment for Indians. It says Malaysia gives unfair, preferential treatment to Muslim Malays, which means Indians _____ business, jobs and education.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'ethnic' and 'tension'.

ethnic	tension
---------------	----------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tough • make up • enjoy • trial • struggle • backwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rocked • tear • decade • causing • treatment • held back
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STUDENT ETHNIC TENSIONS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about ethnic tensions in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
 - b) Do you think there is a nation on Earth that does not suffer from racial tensions?
 - c) What is your image of Malaysia?
 - d) Do you think Malaysia should do something more to help Indians feel they are not being discriminated against?
 - e) Do you think Malaysia is over-reacting by detaining activists without trial?
 - f) Does everyone in your country enjoy equal rights?
 - g) Would you march for your rights in streets full of tear gas and baton charging police officers?
 - h) Do you feel you have wholly equal rights in your country?
 - i) Do you think equal rights campaigns always bring change?
-

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Has your country ever been rocked by racial tension and public protests?
- c) Do you think it is acceptable for the police to use tear gas on peaceful protestors?
- d) Do you think Malaysia is right to arrest people simply because they were "causing a lot of problems"?
- e) Which ethnic groups in your country suffer the most from discrimination?
- f) Are you wholly discrimination free?
- g) Is there a section of your society that enjoys preferential treatment? What form does this take and is it fair?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Johari Baharom?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

The Malaysian government is getting (1) _____ with ethnic Indians who are complaining about racial discrimination. Indians make (2) _____ around eight percent of Malaysia's population of 27 million people, but community leaders say they do not (3) _____ the same rights as Malays and Chinese. Police arrested five activists from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) on Thursday. The five are being held (4) _____ the controversial Internal Security Act, which allows for detention without trial. Hindraf member S. Jayathas told the Associated Free Press news agency that: "Regardless of the arrests, this (5) _____ will move on. We have many leaders who are waiting to take over and we will not go backwards, but (6) _____ ahead with the fight for the rights of Indians in Malaysia."

Malaysia has been (7) _____ in recent weeks by ethnic tensions. Public protests and marches are taking place in the streets and police are reacting violently, using (8) _____ gas, water canons and baton charges. Hundreds of Indians have been injured. The demonstrations are the biggest in Malaysia (9) _____ over a decade and the government fears ethnic unrest in this usually peaceful, multiracial country. Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharom told The Associated Press: "This action is necessary because they [the Indians] have been (10) _____ a lot of problems for the public." Hindraf is demanding equality and fair treatment for Indians. It says Malaysia gives (11) _____, preferential treatment to Muslim Malays, which means Indians are being held (12) _____ in business, jobs and education.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) through | (b) tough | (c) trough | (d) though |
| 2. | (a) with | (b) for | (c) up | (d) at |
| 3. | (a) enjoy | (b) boast | (c) adore | (d) love |
| 4. | (a) by | (b) over | (c) for | (d) under |
| 5. | (a) straggler | (b) straggle | (c) struggle | (d) struggler |
| 6. | (a) moves | (b) move | (c) moved | (d) moving |
| 7. | (a) rocked | (b) rocking | (c) rock | (d) rocks |
| 8. | (a) torn | (b) tears | (c) tear | (d) teardrop |
| 9. | (a) into | (b) an | (c) on | (d) in |
| 10. | (a) causing | (b) caused | (c) causes | (d) cause |
| 11. | (a) fair | (b) unfair | (c) fairly | (d) fairness |
| 12. | (a) with | (b) on | (c) back | (d) front |

WRITING:

Write about *racial discrimination* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about the current problems in Malaysia. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. RACIAL TENSIONS: Make a poster about the different racial and ethnic groups in your country. Highlight the problems each group faces. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

4. DISCRIMINATION: Write a magazine article about the effects of discrimination on a family. Include imaginary interviews with someone who discriminates against ethnic minorities in his/her country and a person who is discriminated against.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to your government leaders. Give them three suggestions on what they should do to create a more tolerant society. Give them three reasons they should take your advice. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. F c. F d. F e. T f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. tough | a. strict |
| 2. make up | b. constitute |
| 3. enjoy | c. have |
| 4. detention | d. custody |
| 5. regardless of | e. ignoring |
| 6. ethnic | f. racial |
| 7. reacting | g. responding |
| 8. unrest | h. trouble |
| 9. preferential | i. special |
| 10. held back | j. restricted |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Indians who are complaining about racial | a. discrimination |
| 2. Indians make up | b. around eight percent |
| 3. leaders say they do not enjoy the | c. same rights |
| 4. detention without | d. trial |
| 5. this struggle will | e. move on |
| 6. Malaysia has been | f. rocked in recent weeks |
| 7. unrest in this usually peaceful, | g. multiracial country |
| 8. demanding equality | h. and fair treatment |
| 9. preferential | i. treatment |
| 10. Indians are being held | j. back in business |

GAP FILL:

Malaysia crackdown on ethnic Indians

The Malaysian government is **getting** tough with ethnic Indians who are complaining about racial discrimination. Indians **make** up around eight percent of Malaysia's population of 27 million people, but community leaders say they do not **enjoy** the same rights as Malays and Chinese. Police arrested five activists from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) on Thursday. The **five** are being held **under** the controversial Internal Security Act, which allows for detention **without** trial. Hindraf member S. Jayathas told the Associated Free Press news agency that: "Regardless of the arrests, this **struggle** will move on. We have many leaders who are waiting to take over and we will not go backwards, but move ahead with the fight for the **rights** of Indians in Malaysia."

Malaysia has been **rocked** in recent weeks by ethnic tensions. Public protests and marches are taking place in the streets and police are reacting violently, using **tear** gas, water canons and baton **charges**. Hundreds of Indians have been injured. The demonstrations are the biggest in Malaysia in over a decade and the government **fears** ethnic unrest in this **usually** peaceful, multiracial country. Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharom told The Associated Press: "This action is necessary because they [the Indians] have been **causing** a lot of problems for the public." Hindraf is demanding equality and fair treatment for Indians. It says Malaysia gives **unfair**, preferential treatment to Muslim Malays, which means Indians are being held **back** in business, jobs and education.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - b 2 - c 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - b 7 - a 8 - c 9 - d 10 - a 11 - b 12 - c