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INDIAN COMMUNITY SHOULD RECOGNISE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING

KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 (Bernama) -- Lack of information and appreciation on the importance of training are two major factors which caused the lack of participation of the Indian mercantile community in the mainstream development, said President of the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KLSICCI) Rajaish K.Saigal.

"We sincerely hope our members and new entrepreneurs have and will recognise the fact that it is only with enhancing their knowledge and skill can they hope to compete and further develop their businesses," he said at the opening of the KLSICCI newly renovated building here today.

It was along this line, the KLSICCI's 40-year-old building was renovated and upgraded to establish a fully equipped training centre and to provide members and others the facilities and opportunities to enable them to enhance their knowledge and skills in entrepreneurship and management, he added.

The newly upgraded building, which cost some RM700,000 to renovate, was officiated by Minister of Entrepreneur Development Datuk Mustapa Mohamed. It houses a business centre, a resource centre, a computer centre and the secretariat of the Kuala Lumpur and Malaysian Indian Chamber as well as the entrepreneur development advisory centre.

The training centre would organise courses in mid-level management for its medium and small sized members.

Rajaish said in his speech that it had been known that the Malaysian Indian community had lagged behind in the process of mainstream national development and growth in virtually all sectors and that there had been a consistent decline in the Indian community's position compared with its other Malaysian brothers.

"The Indian community appreciates and is grateful that the government has recognised the Indian Dilemma several years ago by classifying the community with the other poverty groups in Peninsular Malaysia and those in Sabah and Sarawak," Rajaish added.

However, he added, the recognition had not been translated into specific policy directives and implementation initiatives by the relevant ministries and government agencies.

Meanwhile, President of the Malaysian Associated Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Senator Datuk V.K.K. Teagarajan said the chamber would like to request the government to allocate a certain amount of funds for the development of the Indian business community.

He said the chamber would like to request an initial amount of about RM50 million to be revised to RM100 million, adding that the chamber had already discussed the matter with Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu.

"We hope to send a memorandum regarding this matter to the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad by the middle of next month," he told reporters after the opening ceremony of the building.

He said the chamber would also like to request for a better representation of the Indian community in the government and the quasi-government body and hoped that about five percent stake of the new privatisation scheme would be set aside for the Indian community,

Currently, KLSICCI has about 450 members while the Malaysian Associated Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has about 1,500 members nationwide.

-- BERNAMA

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