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INDIANS SHOULD GAIN MORE FROM SEVENTH M'SIA PLAN, SAYS SAMY VELLU

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 28 (Bernama) -- MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy has asked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to include more "action" in the Seventh Malaysia Plan which would be beneficial to the country's Indian community.

He said today that he sent a letter to Dr Mahathir yesterday to express the feelings of the Indian community over what they had derived from the Sixth Malaysia Plan.

"And I'm asking the prime minister for some action in the Seventh Malaysia plan so that things work in favour of the Indian community," he told reporters after laying the foundation stone of a new building for Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil Ampang, here.

Samy Vellu also said that a think tank initiated by the MIC had come up with a proposal to help define policy guidelines involving the Indian community under the newest Malaysia Plan. The five-year plan starts this year.

The guidelines revolve around several important issues such as poverty eradication, housing, education and economic opportunities for the Indians.

Samy Vellu said the claim by certain people that the Indian community had "gone down to dust" implied that the Barisan Nasional had neglected the Indians in the country.

He said the Indians had derived some benefits but not to expectations, he added.

While admitting that the Indians could not be at par with the Chinese or the bumiputeras, the MIC leader said everything was being done to bring the Indian community forward.

"I don't dream that the Indians will be at par with the Chinese in the economy. I don't dream that the Indians will be at par with the bumiputeras because to be at par with the others, they (the Indians) need government and institutional support," he said.

Samy Vellu, who is Works Minister, also hit out at certain parties for having little faith in Tamil schools.

"The Tamil school standard has been going up. No doubt, sometimes the results in the Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) go up one year and down the next," he said.

He said the schools needed the full support of the community, parents and teachers and they must improve their performances to prove the critics wrong.

Samy Vellu also said that he would meet all the 539 Tamil school principals soon in view of the setting up of 140 centres to conduct UPSR tuition classes.

On the redevelopment programme of four areas in Jalan Klang Lama, he said he would meet Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhamed Taib to discuss the possibility of developing 120 to 160ha of state land to house the squatters from Kg Lindungan, Kg Lindungan Tambahan, Kg Medan and Kg Medan Jaya. -- Bernama