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MIC pledges full support for Dr M

Ashraf Abdullah; Patvinder Singh; Sumitha Martin

SUBANG JAYA, Sat. - The MIC today pledged support for the National Economic Recovery Plan, saying the Indian community stood by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's leadership in overcoming the country's economic problems.

Its president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said despite having enjoyed the fruits of independence for the past 40 years, there were elements attempting to "colonise" the country in other ways.

Samy Vellu, in his address at the party's 52nd General Assembly held at the Sheraton Hotel, Subang Jaya, lauded Dr Mahathir's contributions to the country as a nation builder and international leader, likening him to Churchill and Gandhi.

The Prime Minister was given a standing ovation as Samy Vellu spoke of Dr Mahathir's contributions, which the MIC president said were acknowledged by the Indian community.

Calling for the speedy implementation of the NERP and other efforts to revive the economy, Samy Vellu said getting emotional and placing the blame on certain quarters without knowing the true situation was wrong.

Instead, what was needed was a synergistic effort among Malaysians to unite in ensuring the nation's recovery.

Samy Vellu also touched on the party's goal to raise RM100 million for the party's Koperasi Didik Berhad education scheme which has RM5 million in funds from 25,000 members.

Under the scheme, members are required to save a minimum of RM25 a month per child to be eligible for study loans.

On the plight of estate workers, he said their future was still bleak despite the 40 per cent increase in profits enjoyed by estate owners trading in US currency for their exports.

"The time has come for estate workers to realise that we can no longer depend on traditional sectors."

He said the estate owners' attitude towards their workers had not changed as the workers still earned a small income and lacked proper facilities.

On opportunities for tertiary education for Indian students, he said he regretted that about 400 who obtained good results were unable to gain entry into local institutions of higher learning during the recent intake.

He said the MIC was in the process of setting up the Institute of Technology in Ipoh with the co-operation of the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi and the Universiti Maju in Kedah in co-operation with the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom to address such problems.

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