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MIC co-op targets 300,000 members

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Koperasi Didik Bhd, an education arm of MIC to provide loans for all Malaysians for higher studies, has targeted 300,000 members with savings totalling RM50 million by the end of this year.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was expected to officially launch the co-operative in May.

"We will embark on a major campaign soon for its membership and all MIC branches have been directed to co-operate."

Samy Vellu, who is also the co-operative's chairman, said this after chairing its first board meeting at the MIC headquarters today.

He said the co-operative's members would qualify for loans for their children's education after saving for at least six years.

"With immediate effect, all those who want to obtain education loans from the Maju Institute of Education Development will also be required to become members of the co-operative."

He said a meeting would be held in March to train some 120 officers to answer all questions pertaining to the co-operative, which was open to all races.

In Ipoh, Samy Vellu said Wanita MIC will set up a task force at the State-level to help Indian women in estates and squatter areas deal with social problems.

Perak will be the first followed by Selangor and Johor.

Samy Vellu said it was vital to have the task force in these States as they were beset with social problems.

Speaking after meeting State MIC leaders yesterday, Samy Vellu said the task force would operate in five zones.

He said the MIC headquarters had already begun conducting socio-economic surveys on Indian families in squatter areas and one of those completed is on squatters in Gunong Cheroh, near here.

Samy Vellu also directed the division chiefs to get every Indian eligible to vote in their areas to register as voters to beef up MIC's strength.

Samy Vellu added that the MIC was carrying out a nationwide survey to detect and register Indian hardcore poor families to ensure their livelihood would be improved through existing government aid programmes.

The survey is also aimed at checking social problems caused by poverty.

He said it was important that the survey be carried out as the party believed the government statistics on hardcore poor families among Indian community was incorrect.

He said the actual figure was higher as many Indians who were hardcore poor and living in slums and squatter areas were not accounted for.

"Government statistics indicated that there are very few hardcore poor families in the Indian community, but this is not a mistake of the Government.

"The mistake lies with the Indian people who cannot even register themselves or come forward to say that they are poor and needed aid," he said.

The respective State MIC liaison committee and divisions would conduct the survey.

"It will be an on-going survey and the data would be updated from time to time.

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