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Samy-Indians

MIC TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS WITH A NEW ATTITUDE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28 (Bernama) -- MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu said today the party will shed its decades-long "defensive" approach and embark on the offensive in dealing with matters affecting the Indian community.

"We are not going to be in defence anymore. We will go on an offensive (approach)," he told a news conference after chairing a four-hour MIC Central Working Committee (CWC) meeting at the party headquarters, here.

Describing today's meeting as "very serious", Samy Vellu, who is Works Minister, said the party must be in a position "where if anybody questions us, we must question them back."

"That is our new attitude," he said, denying that it was in response to the allegations levelled against the MIC by the opposition.

"We will answer the opposition claims and we will also will seek details from others in some areas," Samy Vellu said without elaborating.

"We don't have to be frightened of anybody and we don't have to be worried about what is going to happen.

"We are all very matured politicians. We are prepared to face the challenges even if the next (general) election comes. Win or lose, we will do," he said.

Samy Vellu said the MIC and its elected representatives would "fight tooth and nail till the end to prove that the Barisan Nasional (BN) really helps the Indian community."

He said a few disgruntled MIC members who had joined the opposition parties and had been making allegations against the MIC and the BN would "get the right answers from us."

"If they (the opposition) want to challenge us in all our (MIC) 15 state and seven parliamentary constituencies. we welcome them and we will face them," he said.

Samy Vellu also said that many of the CWC members had expressed concern over what would be the final report of the National Economic Consultative Council II (NECC II).

"In general terms, we (the Indians) have not met the requirements (thus far)," he said.

Asked what he meant by the requirements, he said "some kind of an affirmative action" should have been taken specifically to uplift the standard of living and the equity participation of the Indian community in previous government policies and master plans.

Citing an example, he said although official figures showed that there was a satisfactory level of Indian student enrollment in the local public universities, a study conducted by the MIC proved otherwise.

"When this kind of things happen, we have to fight for the Indian community," he said.

Samy Vellu also announced a series of activities to be organised by the MIC.

He said that apart from the "Ceramah Perdana" which was being held nationwide, the party would also hold a national-level "Ceramah Perdana" here to be addressed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Samy Vellu said the party would also hold a special meeting of MIC divisional leaders soon to get feedback on the number of Indians still living in poverty.

"We will distribute questionnaires to them which will then be compiled

and forwarded to the Economic Planning Unit and NECC II," he said.

The party believed that there were about 5,000 Indians still living below the poverty line.

On the issue of fixed monthly wage for estate workers, Samy Vellu said the MIC had completed a report on the matter and would soon forward it to the Cabinet for further action.

-- BERNAMA

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