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Squatters

MIC TO MEET ABU HASSAN OVER SQUATTER ISSUE

KUALA LUMPUR, June 30 (Bernama) -- The MIC will meet Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar next week to discuss the plight of squatters, especially those from the Indian community, in Selangor.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the party found that many Indians in the state became squatters because their low income prevented them from buying or renting homes.

"The squatters are victims of progress, having to seek jobs in urban areas after the estates where they worked were closed down," he said after chairing the MIC Central Working Committee (CWC), here.

Samy Vellu who is the Works Minister said he would propose that the Selangor government provide land for the squatters to build their own houses.

He said at the meeting the MIC would raise the issue of Kampung Sungai Nipah, Shah Alam, where the village squatters refused to move despite being offered long houses, RM9,000 compensation and low-cost housing by the state government.

He said the squatters were instigated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who claimed that the compensation was insufficient.

In last Monday's incident, police had to use a water cannon after villagers and NGO leaders tried to prevent the demolition of 44 squatter houses in the village, ending with the detention of 44 men and seven women.

In another development, Samy Vellu said the two-day MIC general assembly from July 31 would be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the function would be attended by 5,000 delegates and observers.

The MIC would also launch the Malaysian Indian Artistes Foundation at the assembly.

Samy Vellu said the CWC meeting today agreed to amending the party constitution to increase the number of MIC youth and wanita representatives, to two each in the CWC.

-- BERNAMA

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