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Indian-Splinter (News focus)

SPLINTER PARTIES WASTING TIME, SAYS FORMER DMIP PRESIDENT

By: Mohd Nasir Yusoff

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 24 (Bernama) -- "It's a waste of good, ten precious years." This is how former Democratic Malaysian Indian Party (DMIP) president Datuk V. Govindaraj sums up the time and effort spent on the party he founded and later dissolved.

He has no regrets about forming the party on Oct 19, 1985 although he admitted it was a frustrating struggle as the DMIP could not get itself into the Barisan Nasional (BN) as aspired by its 80,000 members.

"Getting into the BN was the only thing that we in the DMIP wanted to do as we have always believed that only the BN works for the benefit of the rakyat," he told Bernama.

"Being a splinter party for the sake of being just a party is not worth it...I wasted 10 bloody years," he said.

Govindaraj, now back in MIC as a Central Working Committee (CWC) member, said he had tried his best to get DMIP into the BN but failed because admission into the 14-member coalition must be unanimously agreed to by all component parties.

Govindaraj, a former MIC vice-president, formed the DMIP after being sacked from MIC for an allegation he insists he is not guilty of.

"Although we were in DMIP we never went against MIC or the BN," said Govindaraj, the so-called "gentleman" of Indian politics.

He said DMIP had worked closely with BN and MIC during by-elections and the general elections.

"As a politician I must do something for the community. I'm a Malaysian and duty-bound to help the Indian community," he said.

He said throughout his years in DMIP, most members of the splinter party urged him to return to the BN fold via MIC.

So when MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu made a statement on July 28, 1997 that MIC's doors were always open to all Indians, Govindaraj immediately responded positively to it.

"I issued a statement on July 30, and the next day Samy spoke to me on the phone at 1.15pm, welcoming me and the whole bunch back into the MIC," he said.

He said not a single member objected when he proposed the dissolution of DMIP. DMIP was officially disbanded on Aug 2, 1997.

He said many in the MIC did not take their return well, but that did not matter as "our hearts have always been with the MIC".

"Now we have formed 46 new branches and all have been approved by the MIC CWC...the branches cater for about 6,000 former DMIP members," he said.

Why back to MIC?

"There's just one simple reason. The MIC is the only party that can take care of the Indians...not DMIP, not IPF (Indian Progressive Front)," he said.

"Let us strengthen the MIC...we will also strengthen the BN for our betterment," he said.

He urged opposition parties not to play with fire by fanning ill-feelings among the various races.

Govindaraj said he had great admiration for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Samy Vellu.

"They are fully blessed by God to serve the people of this country. Please don't destroy their leadership," he said.

Govindaraj said the Indians have achieved tremendous progress and

should be happy with what they have while helping to achieve the Vision
2020 objectives.

-- BERNAMA

MNY YBY