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Call to increase number of Indians participating in AIM scheme

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Wanita MIC members want a greater say in the decision-making process, besides increasing the number of Indians in the Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) scheme.

These were high on the list of issues raised by delegates to the 16th MIC National Women's Assembly.

MIC national women's leader Senator Jaya Partiban said party president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu should allocate at least 10 per cent of party nominees to local authorities and board of directors in the corporate sector to members of the women's wing.

She said this was to counter the drop in the number of women in district and town councils, which had decreased from 12 to seven.

This would also be in line with efforts by other Barisan Nasional component parties to strengthen the position of women in their respective parties.

Delegates also pledged their unwavering support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the leadership of Samy Vellu.

On the scheme, she said only 12 of the 50,000 hardcore poor Malaysians who had received aid were Indians. This was due to rigid conditions of eligibility imposed by AIM.

She urged the Rural Development Ministry to expand the scheme to include 100 Indian households this year, to be more flexible with the eligibility criteria and to employ some Tamil-speaking staff to realise the target.

With the resolution, Indian women entrepreneurs would also be able to start small businesses with AIM loans.

A resolution to allocate at least 10 per cent of low cost housing for single mothers was also passed at the assembly.

Jaya said that the housing would be affordable to these women as the rental money could be channelled towards the purchase of the house.

Meanwhile, the MIC Youth today passed five resolutions at the Youth Assembly with priority going to that related to monthly wages for plantation workers.

They also pledged their undivided support for Dr Mahathir and Samy Vellu.

Delegates felt that plantation workers' commitment for over a century had to be taken into consideration in the fight for monthly salaries.

They urged the Human Resource Ministry to speed the approval of monthly wage for plantation workers without any delay.

They fully supported the construction of the Asian Medicine, Science and Technology Institute in Semeling in Kedah.

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