

29 FEB 2000

Samy-Estates

MIC SEEKS GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION ON ESTATE PROBLEMS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 29 (Bernama) -- MIC is seeking the government's intervention to solve the many problems besetting some 200,000 estate workers in the country, said party president Datuk Seri S Samy Vellu.

He said a report on estate workers touching on, among others, the proposed monthly pay, housing, education and economic conditions, had been completed and would be submitted to the Cabinet in two weeks' time.

Forward copies have already been submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn and Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik.

"The problems of estate workers have to be settled by the government and not to leave it in the hands of the private sector alone," he said after launching the LCD Desktop Computer by Maika Technologies Sdn Bhd here today.

Maika Technologies, a subsidiary of MIC-run Maika Holdings Bhd, is teaming up with DP Computers Pte Ltd of Singapore to distribute the computers in Malaysia.

Samy Vellu, who is Works Minister, said the government, whose agencies such as Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) are major estate owners, has a role to play on the issues concerning estate workers.

"The government, being a shareholder, has a say. So, I want to impress upon the government of what needs to be done," he said.

On the breakdown in talks between the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW) and the Malayan Agricultural Producers' Association (MAPA), Samy Vellu said he was informed about it today and the union's plan to stage a nationwide picket.

"My advice to the union is to check the laws before doing anything and see what is best," he said.

On the Navy Recruit Training Centre (Pularek) in Tanjung Pengelih, Johor, Samy Vellu said action would be taken against errant contractors for their shoddy work.

The RM195 million complex has been plagued by structural defects.

Samy Vellu said most of the defects had been attended to but some repairs had to be re-done as they were not done according to the ministry's specifications.

-- BERNAMA

RV THG