

IPP wants Indians too as PM's advisers

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Indian Progressive Front is appealing to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to consider appointing Indians as advisers if the Prime Minister was thinking about appointing Chinese as his advisers.

It was reported recently that two Malaysian Chinese might be appointed as advisers to Dr Mahathir.

IPF president Datuk M.G. Pandithan said while the party welcomed the move, he hoped that Indians would be given the same opportunity.

"It's time to appoint Indians to the Government so that they can make direct representation without going through the intricate network of a political party.

"There are still many Indians who are not members of any political party," he told *The New Straits Times*.

He was commenting on MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu's statement at the party's 55th general assembly in Johor Baru on Saturday that there was no need for Indians to be appointed as the Prime Minister's advisers.

Samy Vellu said the task could be taken by MIC which had representatives in the Government.

Pandithan said not all of the two million Indians in the country were members of a political party.

"MIC need not be alarmed if there is such an appointment as it does not mean their representation of Indians is inadequate. It only means that the problems of Indians can be brought to the attention of the Government in better ways."

He added that the Government too needs an independent view of the problems faced by the Indian community, one that was not influenced by any political party.

He said there were many problems facing the Indians, some of which had been discussed time and again but for which solutions had not been found.

MIC vice-president Datuk S. Veerasingam pointed out that such an appointment was the prerogative of the Prime Minister but if an adviser was appointed, MIC would welcome it as it would mean that Indians had another representative in the Government.

People's Progressive Party president Datuk M. Kayveas said the Prime Minister should consider appointing an Indian as his adviser too as with one, the question of Indians being marginalised would not rise.

He said an ideal adviser would be one who could give a fair and direct representation of Indians without any political bias.