

19 MAY 2001

Mahathir-MIC

MIC STILL POPULAR WITH INDIAN COMMUNITY, SAYS MAHATHIR

JOHOR BAHRU, May 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today praised MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu for his firmness in strengthening the party which he said is still popular and receives the support of the majority of the Indians.

"The MIC is still a big umbrella that protects their (Indian community's) rights and interests in our country," he said when opening the MIC's 55th general assembly here.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said the MIC, under Samy Vellu's firm leadership, continued to thrive and progress in line with the aspirations of the people in the country.

He said although the party was not the only party made up of Malaysians of Indian origin, it had championed the lot of the whole Indian community in the country irrespective of their status or political leaning.

He congratulated the party for its determination and hard work in struggling to improve the socio-economic status of Malaysian Indians who had yet to reach a satisfactory level of development.

He said that as with the other races, namely the Malays and the Chinese, there were still groups within the Indian community who were still lagging or were left out by development.

These groups were found not only in the estates and villages but also in the towns, especially in squatter areas.

Dr Mahathir said that with low and irregular income their life was not complete and this contributed to the social problems in the country today.

However, they were not alone and the MIC constantly monitored and helped to improve their plight, he said.

The assistance included basic amenities like water and electricity supply, roads, schools and medical and health centres provided for these groups by the government through the MIC.

He also said that although the MIC played an active role in efforts to raise the status of the Indian community, the government also did not shirk its responsibility to improve their lot just like it had helped the other races.

-- BERNAMA

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