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Thaipusam-MIC

MIC SEEKS APPROVAL FROM STATES TO DECLARE THAIPUSAM A HOLIDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 7 (Bernama) -- The MIC has been asked to seek the cooperation of state governments to declare Thaipusam a public holiday before seeking such approval for Kuala Lumpur, MIC president Datuk Seri Samy Vellu said today.

He said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had agreed that the party should seek the cooperation of the states to declare the festival a holiday before consideration could be given for Kuala Lumpur.

Speaking to reporters after addressing the Thaipusam crowd at Batu Caves here, he said the MIC was applying to the Melaka government to declare the day a holiday while talks had begun with Pahang.

"We are working state by state before we ask the federal government to declare Thaipusam a public holiday in Kuala Lumpur," he said.

Samy Vellu said the Melaka government had said that they would seek the views of Dr Mahathir on the MIC's request.

Thaipusam has been observed as a public holiday in five states -- Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Selangor, Penang and Perak.

Samy Vellu, who is also Works Minister, also officially launched the Gujerat Disaster Fund at the Batu Caves temple grounds.

The fund, initiated by Samy Vellu and jointly organised by a Tamil daily last week, has so far raised RM530,000. A target of RM2 million has been set before the donation drive ends on March 31.

The fund is to help earthquake victims in Gujerat, western India, which was devastated by a strong earthquake on Jan 26, killing more than 15,000 people.

Earlier in his brief speech, Samy Vellu called on the Hindus to pray for unity among all races in the country to ensure that economic and political stability could be sustained.

The temple's chairman, R. Nadarajah, later presented RM10,001 to Samy for the Gujerat fund.

Among the dignitaries who attended the function were party leaders and Sri Lanka High Commissioner to Malaysia Dayachandra Yasasiri Liyanage and Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri.

-- BERNAMA

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