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Samy-Artiste
MALAYSIAN INDIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL IN AUGUST

KUALA LUMPUR, June 8 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Indian Cultural Festival, the first of its kind in the country, will be held on Aug 24.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the festival would be held in a grand manner to commemorate the independence day celebrations on Aug 31.

He said the festival would be organised by the Malaysian Indian Artistes Foundation (MIAF) and many local Indian artistes would take part.

Samy Vellu, who is also the permanent chairman of the foundation, said artistes who had contributed much to the development of Indian culture in the country would also be honoured.

The event will also offer cash rewards and nominate one outstanding artiste to be picked as "artiste of the year".

"Besides developing the culture of the Indian community in Malaysia, the festival will also give recognition to the contributions made by the fine arts community towards the growth of the culture," he told reporters after officiating the foundation's second general meeting at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

The foundation was launched on Feb 20 last year to unite the Malaysian Indian artistes as well as to look into their welfare and groom new talents.

So far the foundation has registered 421 members from the whole country.

Samy Vellu, who is also the MIC president, said the members of the foundation were now covered by insurance.

The foundation plans to promote local Tamil songs, produce recordings of Tamil albums, develop Tamil dramas as well as make an effort to get tax relief from the government for donations towards the foundation.

On another matter, Samy Vellu said the meeting between the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Pope John Paul II in Vatican City yesterday seemed like an important opportunity for the Prime Minister to explain the various pertinent issues in the world.

He said, the Prime Minister was the first leader from an Islamic nation in the region who had been invited to meet with Pope John Paul II and believed the opportunity was well taken by the Prime Minister to explain Malaysia's views which included the Palestinian issue.

"As such he has become more popular and can be referred to as a statesman," he said.

-- BERNAMA
RV AFY VRM AO