

Samy: AIMST to be ready by May

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SUNGAI PETANI: The RM400mil Asian Institute of Medicine, Science & Technology (AIMST) is expected to be fully operational by May next year.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said work at the 92ha site in Semeling, about 15km from here, was continuing according to schedule.

Samy Vellu and 40 members of the party's central working committee members were briefed on the work progress.

This is the first time the MIC leaders visited the site although they had helped to raise funds to build the college for several years.

He said although the contractors faced several unexpected problems during piling work besides unpredictable weather, they had given the assurance that it would be ready on time.

Samy Vellu said the various faculties, administrative building, lecture theatres, library, students' hostels and officers' quarters were in various stages

of construction. campus in Bandar Amanjaya here.

"There are also plans for indoor and outdoor stadiums, houses for the vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellor and faculty heads and a guesthouse within the campus," he said, adding that the party had raised RM180mil for the project, of which half had been spent.

He expressed confidence that MIC could collect another RM120mil before the end of the year and would seek another RM300mil from financial institutions to equip and administer AIMST for five years.

"AIMST has the capacity to take in 7,500 students under the first phase and increase to 12,500 students in the second phase. We have also obtained another piece of land in Perak which will be a branch of AIMST," he said.

AIMST is currently running several matriculation and degree programmes - medicine, biotechnology, information technology and computer science - at its RM9mil interim

Samy Vellu said the party had invited Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to perform the groundbreaking ceremony for AIMST in September.

He said AIMST would not face any problems as it had gone through the entire process to obtain government approval.

"We have from time to time asked the National Accreditation Board to inspect and they have come here twice. We are closely abiding by the rules and regulations," he said.

Samy Vellu said there were plans for a nationwide roadshow to create awareness of AIMST among the Indians.

"Many of them are successful but reluctant in contributing to the college," he said.

He added that there were about 850,000 working Indians and if they contributed RM10 per month, a huge sum could be collected for AIMST.