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MIC-Election

ASPIRANTS TAKING DELEGATES ON HOLIDAY TRIPS FACE SACK - SAMY VELLU

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- The MIC will expel or suspend any party leader found to have taken delegates, in the run-up to the party polls, to holiday destinations as the party viewed this trips as an inducement to get votes, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said today.

"The trips are an inducement to vote for a certain candidate. This must stop. We will not hesitate to expel or suspend any leader who practised this activity," he said.

However, the party would not stop aspiring candidates from holding meetings or dinners with the delegates as it believed that in a democracy, this can be tolerated, he told reporters after chairing the party's Central Working Committee (CWC) meeting at MIC headquarters here.

In the 2000 MIC election, there were two cases of aspiring candidates sponsoring trips to Thailand for the delegates and this time around, one such case had been reported to the party headquarters, he said.

Pressed to reveal details of the recent case, Samy Vellu, who is Works Minister, refused to divulge information, saying that it was a division leader "who had done the same thing the last time around."

The CWC meeting today fixed March 30 for the presidential election while nomination would be on March 8. Polling, in the event of a contest, would be from 10am to 1pm at the 4,500 branches.

The party's highest decision-making body also decided that the election for other top party posts would be on May 10. Nomination date has yet to be decided.

MIC, the largest Indian-based party in the country, would also hold its two-day annual general assembly from May 10. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would declare open the assembly.

Last year, the party amended its constitution to allow for the presidential election be held within three months before the expiry of the president's term. Samy Vellu's presidency ends on May 27.

Amendments to the party constitution also allow for the 4,500 branch chairmen to cast their ballots to pick the MIC president. Previously, only divisional delegates were given the rights to elect the party supremo.

Samy Vellu said all MIC branches were required to hold their annual meetings and election of office bearers by Feb 28 while MIC divisions have until March 31 to do so. All state MIC's should complete their annual general meetings by April 30.

He said the dates for the party elections were fixed by the MIC election steering committee headed by MIC veteran Tan Sri G. Pasamanickam.

Asked on his advice to aspiring candidates, he said the party wanted its leaders and members to be disciplined and follow all the rules and regulations of the party.

"Safeguard the name of the party...if anyone starts a fight or other nonsense, strict disciplinary action would be taken," he said.

Samy Vellu said the party would amend its constitution to allow for the inclusion of Puteri MIC only when the wing reaches its 10,000 membership target expected in the next six months.

"So far, they have about 2,900 members, we want 10,000 members in the next six months. The moment they have 10,000 Puteri members, we will work on the constitution amendment...they have to prove their credibility," he said.

He also announced the setting up of a new MIC division in Cameron

Highlands due to the high number of branches now under the Kuala Lipis division.

"Branch leaders in Cameron Highlands find it difficult to travel to Kuala Lipis due to the distance, there is also a high number of branches in the division. So, we have decided to break up the Kuala Lipis division," he said.

He said the party would also review all divisions in the country once the Election Commission finalises the parliamentary and state constituency boundaries.

-- BERNAMA

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