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Messages-2004

2004 AUGERS WELL FOR INDIAN COMMUNITY, SAYS SAMY VELLU

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 30 (Bernama) -- The year 2004 is expected to auger well for the Malaysian Indian community with the opening of the Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology (AIMST), a college run by the MIC.

Party president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the MIC would create history next year as the institute would be opened fully and thus give the community more opportunity to pursue higher studies, particularly in the fields of engineering and medicine.

"Development in the field of education will continue to be the main agenda for the MIC in 2004," he said in his 2004 New Year message.

He said the MIC would continue to champion the cause of the Indian community in this country especially in ensuring that they received adequate education, particularly for those in the low income group.

"The MIC upholds the principle that education is the key to success for the race," he said.

Samy Vellu, who is also Works Minister, said that in the political aspect Malaysia would remain peaceful under the leadership of new Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said the MIC was confident that Barisan Nasional (BN) would be capable of continuing its success to administer the country with a bigger victory in the coming general election.

In his message, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the rise of religious fundamentalism from all quarters would be a challenge which all Malaysians should look out for in the coming year.

"Religious fundamentalism that plays up the differences between the different races that co-exist in peace and harmony in Malaysia should be rejected at all cost," he said.

Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, said 2004 would see the continued progress of Abdullah's new administration after he took office as Malaysia's fifth prime minister from Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Nov 1, 2003.

Lim was confident that public support, shown in recent months over Abdullah's commitment to fight corruption, to pursue fiscal prudence and to promote racial harmony, would continue well into the New Year.

He said the smooth transition of power from Dr Mahathir to Abdullah showed the maturity and stability of the BN as a political entity.

"The confidence of the people of Malaysia in the leadership of Abdullah and the BN is further proof of the promise of peace, prosperity and development which the BN has delivered to Malaysians of all races and religions throughout its 46 years in power," he added.

On another note, he said Malaysians must also continue to be vigilant and lend their support to efforts of the government to eradicate terrorism as well as the influence of terrorism.

People's Progressive Party (PPP) president Datuk M. Kayveas said Malaysians should strive to gain more knowledge to create a more educated and strong-minded society.

"Mastering knowledge is crucial in raising the people's level of thinking and preparing them to face new challenges in the globalised world which is highly competitive," he said in his 2004 New Year message.

He said if Malaysians were complacent and failed to equip themselves according to current changes, "We will be left behind and find difficulty

in competing against those with better knowledge and the country will find it difficult to achieve progress."

Kayveas, who is also Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, said parents should also know how to educate their children wisely by absorbing good moral values so that they would have strong resilience.

Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) president S.M. Mohamed Idrus said Malaysians should reduce spending or buying unnecessary things as such practices could bring hazards to them.

He said it was estimated that Malaysians spent RM21 billion on cigarettes, RM1.9 billion on alcohol and RM30 billion on gambling each year.

"All these are hazardous to health and lead to family disintegration, suicides, and disturbances by loan sharks as well as numerous other social problems," he said in his New Year message.

At the same time, Malaysians who liked to spend were now landed with massive debts which they could not afford to settle, he said.

"We have about 27,300 cases of bankruptcies due to credit cards in 2001. All these do not lead to better life, instead, they lead to chaos for the family.

"We hope that more consumers would realise the adverse consequences brought about by such practices and avoid wastage and a destructive way of life next year," he said.

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