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Call to make way for younger leaders

THE debate on whether Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu should step down as MIC president rages on with Indian Progressive Front president Datuk M.G. Pandithan weighing in with a call for the Works Minister to step down.

Pandithan was quoted by Malaysia Nanban as saying that Samy Vellu should emulate Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in allowing younger people to take over.

The former MIC vice-president said only Samy Vellu's departure would unite the Indian community. While there have been similar calls from other IPF officials in the past week, there have also been rebuttals from the MIC ranks explaining why the MIC president was still needed.

Pandithan said while Tun V.T. Sambanthan only stayed as party chief for 16 years, Samy Vellu had exceeded this by eight years.

Meanwhile, Malaysia Nanban and Tamil Nesan yesterday gave extensive coverage to Deepavali celebrations nationwide on the second day of the festival on Saturday with stories and pictures of open houses.

Prominence was also given to the national open house in Penang.

Also featured was the open house by MIC deputy president Datuk S. Subramaniam.

As Malaysians celebrated the festival in comfort, a group of Indians in Seberang Prai could not do so because of floods.

Tamil Nesan published pictures of them congregating at a community hall. It was almost the same fate for three Indian families in Shah Alam whose houses were damaged by fire.