

26/07/2003

## Election fever grips Barisan Nasional partners

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ELECTION fever seems to be in the air with Barisan Nasional components, including the MIC, making statements on the number of parliamentary and State seats that they may be contesting in the next general election.

Tamil Nesan and Malaysia Nanban led off their front-pages with a story quoting MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu as saying that the party was looking at least 10 additional seats this time around.

While Tamil Nesan quoted the Works Minister as saying that the party was expecting at least two parliamentary and between six and eight State seats, Malaysia Nanban specifically quoted him as saying that it would be two and eight seats respectively.

Samy Vellu had told the Press in Sungai Petani on Thursday after a briefing on the party-owned Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology that the party would submit its proposal on the matter to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He was quoted as saying that MIC was already prepared to go to the hustings with its Youth, Puteri and Wanita wings.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Hindus have been urged to be wary of bogus faith-healers who claimed they could rid anyone of evil spirits.

Malaysian Hindu Sangam president Datuk A. Vaithilingam was quoted by Tamil Nesan as saying that the community should not be gullible.

His statement comes in the wake of reports that police had rescued 15 people from several families who had been "kidnapped" by a bogus medium and his two accomplices ostensibly for rituals connected to exorcism.

The medium, who is expected to be charged with cheating, was from India, the newspaper reported.

On a lighter note, owners of traditional Indian barber shops in Penang are seeking government intervention in bringing in at least 2,500 workers from India in the face of a shortage of workers.

A Penang Indian Barbers Association spokesman told Malaysia Nanban that two memorandums had been submitted to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on the matter.