

12/05/2003

`Shed labourer image'

reports on "MIC General Assembly 2003" by Zubaidah Abu Bakar; M.K. MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said Indians in the country must work towards changing their "labourer" image by placing more emphasis on education.

He said the MIC on its part was hoping that the construction of the Asian Institute of Medical Science and Technology in Kedah would pave the way for more Indian children to pursue their education and become professionals.

"We will also set up a loan facility to ensure even those who are under-privileged can send their children to pursue their studies," he said at a Press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

To help those who are not keen to pursue their studies, Samy Vellu said the party would use its Tafe College in Seremban to provide training in various fields to help them secure good jobs.

He said the party had also written to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad asking him for financial assistance to rebuild about 20 Tamil schools per year over the next eight years.

"We will also be meeting Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Nazri Aziz to discuss the possibility of providing better loan facilities to help more Indians set up businesses."

He said the MIC was also upset with the number of deaths in police lock-ups and had asked the Cabinet to instruct the police to conduct a detailed investigation.

"We have also requested that the police look into cramped cells where many inmates were placed in a single cell."

Samy Vellu said the MIC had received numerous requests from single Indian mothers to help them set up small businesses and had decided to set up a RM200,000 loan facility for this purpose.

"Unlike previous loan facilities provided by the party, we will not give them the money upfront, but instead assist them in buying the necessary materials to set up their business and give them the money on a weekly basis for operational costs."

Samy Vellu said the party would also look into providing various skills training programmes for single mothers to help them secure jobs.

On the circulation of poison-pen letters and VCDs containing allegations against certain candidates who contested the central working committee posts, he said such tactics were a dying culture.

He said only losers resorted to such tactics to discredit their opponents.

Samy Vellu said the success of the only woman candidate, G. Vimalah Nair, in securing a seat in the CWC, indicated that the delegates had the maturity and independence to elect whoever they deemed fit.