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MIC's role in getting monthly wages for estate workers

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TWO senior MIC officials have attributed the successful negotiation of monthly wages for plantation workers to the efforts of the party in obtaining the support of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Cabinet in the matter.

MIC vice-presidents Datuk G. Palanivel and Datuk S. Veerasingham said MIC chief Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu had lobbied Cabinet members on several occasions to support the issue besides engaging in discussions with the Prime Minister.

Tamil Nesan quoted Palanivel on Monday as saying that the RM350 monthly salary was a sign of victory for the MIC, adding that the Works Minister had established a strong case for monthly wages despite opposition from the Malaysian Agricultural Producers Association.

Veerasingham was quoted by the Malaysia Nanban on Monday as saying that the monthly wage was testimony of the commitment of the MIC chief, the National Union of Plantation Workers, MAPA and the Human Resources Ministry towards the welfare of plantation workers.

The contest for the three MIC vice-presidencies saw the Tamil Nesan carrying a statement from Samy Vellu on Monday which stated that he would not stop Central Working Committee member Datuk V.K.K. Teagarajan from joining the fray despite endorsing the three incumbents.

Samy Vellu was quoted as saying that his vote of approval for Palanivel, Veerasingham and Tan Sri K.S. Nijhar stood despite Teagarajan's 11th hour bid to stake a claim to the post which is usually accompanied by a position in government.

The May 10 MIC annual general assembly is expected to see a tough fight for the vice-presidencies especially for Nijhar, also the MP for Subang, who came in with the smallest number of votes for the position in the last party polls.