

27/10/2003

Samy Vellu only leader capable of leading Indians, says Kayveas

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu is the only leader capable of leading MIC, the People's Progressive Party president Datuk M. Kayveas said today.

"Other than Samy Vellu, I do not see any other leader who is capable of leading the Indian community," he said after closing the PPP's 50th general assembly at Putra World Trade Centre.

He was responding to a statement by Indian Progressive Front president Datuk M.G. Pandithan urging Samy Vellu to step down.

He said Pandithan's statement was causing disunity among Indians, adding that his remark was a personal attack against Samy Vellu and not focused on the issue at hand.

"If you give a reason that Samy Vellu is too old, then he (Pandithan) should step down as well.

"It is like his statement about Tamil schools. He didn't understand the issue; he just made a personal attack."

Kayveas and Pandithan were in a dispute earlier this year about the relevance of Tamil schools.

He said that as a politician, Pandithan should argue an issue based on facts.

"As far as Pandithan's attitude is concerned, it is disappointing. I can't support leaders like that."

On an unrelated matter, he said he was disappointed with the absence of MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting at the opening of PPP's general assembly today.

MCA was represented by its Federal Territory chairman Datuk Tan Chai Ho at assembly, which was opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Kayveas said PPP had sent an invitation to Ong to attend the assembly, which was originally scheduled for Oct 28.

However, he said PPP had later sent another letter to Ong informing him that the event was carried forward to today.

"I feel upset that Ong did not attend our function," he said.

"Our relationship has never been good from the days when I was serving as his deputy in the Housing and Local Government Ministry.

"We did not communicate much with each other," said Kayveas, now a Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

He said he and Ong never made efforts to exchange views or understand each other's party.