

**DAP: Palanivel first 'you help me, I help you' minister**  
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MIC President G Palanivel has made “dubious history” in being the first cabinet minister to obtain the post not by merit, but in a “most blatant 'I help you, you help me' barter” arrangement, said Lim Kit Siang.

Responding in a statement today on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's announcement of Palanivel's ministership at MIC's 65th AGM in Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC) yesterday, the DAP veteran was scathing in what he called “the most cynical cabinet appointment ever made in Malaysian history under six prime ministers”

The DAP advisor and Ipoh Timor MP also pointed out that while Najib had cited his father Abdul Razak having two Indian minister, the difference, said Lim, could not be more different.

“In Razak's time in 1976, MIC was in a position of strength but today in 2011 MIC is in position of unprecedented weakness,” said Lim.

He added that the appointment adds further strain to an already “over-bloated” cabinet.

“Palanivel's 'barter' appointment, announced at the 'don't debate Interlok novel' 65th MIC general assembly yesterday, will inflate an already over-bloated Cabinet and set (several) dubious records.”

First, said Lim, was that the Prime Minister's Department will now has six ministers, or 20 percent of the cabinet strength.

Secondly, this represents the most number of senators in the cabinet the country has seen.

Lim said this has undermined the legitimacy of Najib's cabinet and his “BN leaders first, Performance later” administration.

**Think tank to uplift Indians?**

Meanwhile Bernama reported that a delegate at MIC's general assembly today appealed to the party's leadership to form a think tank to come out with strategies to uplift the economy of the Indian community.

MIC 65th AGM pwtc crowd piccBatu division chairperson C Ramanathan said the group should not only comprise financial experts from MIC but outside experts from the Indian community as well.

“It is time that we shift our mindset towards economic upliftment of the Indian community as our first priority. Our economic equity is only 1.1 percent, it must be increased in stages to three percent, five percent or even higher.

“If it (think tank) can help increase our economic participation it will automatically solve a lot of problems on children's education, unemployment, scholarships, social problems and others,” he said when debating the MIC president's policy speech at the party AGM today.

Another delegate, Putrajaya division chairman SS Ganapathy said the time had come for small entrepreneurs from the community to go global and that one of the ways to do this was to opt for the franchising model.

A delegate, M Vickneswari, from the Shah Alam division, got a blasting from him when she urged the MIC leadership to form a special committee to chose MIC senators and candidates for the next election.

Telling the delegate to think before she spoke, Kumaran said, “Are you saying that our president (G Palanivel) is not qualified to choose (the candidates)?”

When another delegate called for Indians and Chinese to be recognised as "Anak Malaysia" (Children of Malaysia) just like bumiputera for Malays and other indigenous ethnic groups and not by their race, Kumaran said such an intention was good but reminded the delegate that just like their bumiputera counterparts, they too were born raised and would die in Malaysia.

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