

Samy Vellu: Cats and monkeys aplenty in MIC
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MIC's longest-serving president S Samy Vellu has called his successor G Palanivel a weak leader for not being able to answer back to his critics and for letting "monkeys" do the work for him instead.

Samy Vellu, now a Malaysian diplomat to India and Southern Asia, was responding to those who took him to task for criticising Palanivel - the leader he had groomed for 20 years - in an interview with The Star newspaper.

However, he pointed out, that it was not Pananivel (left), who was his former press secretary, who had admonished him for airing his views.

"My God, when you become the president of MIC, even the cat on the road has a right to criticise you. If any politician does not think he can be criticised, I don't think he should be in politics."

"When I was there, I fought. I think it is not Palanivel who said that but some parties... Palanivel is okay. He is a good leader but the people around him are stopping him from doing his work."

The outspoken Samy Vellu also issued a challenge to these anonymous MIC leaders who turned around and attacked him.

"Now, let the people come out and say who are they... I will name the fellas, these are fellas whom I have never even allowed to enter my office.

"You know why? You can't take a monkey and put in your room," Samy told reporters after giving away books to needy primary students from Tamil schools in a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur.

The books, to help students sitting for their Standard Six UPSR examination this year, were contributed by Maju Institute of Educational Development (MIED), which spent RM500,000 printing some 17,000 copies to be given away.

Samy Vellu was MIC president from 1979 until 2010 when he handed over the post to Palanivel.

He was also one of the longest serving cabinet ministers in Malaysia before losing his Sungai Siput parliamentary seat in 2008 to PSM's Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj and subsequently retired from high office.

No say on national controversies

However, the 77-year old veteran politician declined to comment on the more serious national issues.

Asked whether he would speak up for M Indira Gandhi and S Deepa, Hindu mothers who are fighting for custody of their Muslim-convert children, Samy clammed up.

"I won't make any comment since I am still part of the government. I am the special envoy for 12 countries," Samy Vellu said.

"I know how serious the matter is. Whatever action they are taking, let them do," he said adding that he would not even comment as an MIC leader, since he was a party outsider today, only "one of the owners of MIC".

Asked on another recent controversy as to whether Malaysia is a secular state or not, Samy Vellu said: "So many people have opened their mouths and they got into trouble. I better not talk about it.

"One thing I can say, if you compare this country with other countries. This is one country with all the (different) cultures and religions, we are still living closely and we respect one another.

"That is Malaysia and we are very happy about that. I am already 77 years old and I am so happy that I was born in a country of peace that is Malaysia."

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