

Anwar to Samy: I am ashamed of you
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MIC supremo Samy Vellu received a lashing from Anwar Ibrahim last night for what he alleged as the Indian leader's neglect of his own community in the country.

"The Indians in the estates were treated like slaves. They live in abject poverty in fear of thugs and their overlord minister," Anwar said.

"The Indians were treated as third class, not by us but by you," he added, referring to Samy, who is also works minister.

Speaking to an audience of over 1,000 PAS members in Taman Melewar, Kuala Lumpur, the former deputy premier also claimed that the estate workers of Ijok were intimidated and bribed into supporting the BN.

MIC had been the best performing BN component in the by-election, winning over 80 percent of the Indian vote.

While winning half the Malay vote and over 60 percent the Chinese vote, the opposition PKR registered a 1.5 percent increase in Indian support compared to the previous election. Indians comprise 28 percent of the Ijok electorate.

Fear and bribery

Apparently emboldened, Samy had, on Thursday, issued a challenge to Anwar to contest in the former's turf in Sungai Siput should the election be held after April next year.

"The MIC leader proudly boasted the fact that vast majority of Indians are behind him and MIC," said Anwar.

"I want to remind my friend, Samy Vellu, that as a Malaysian, a Malay and a Muslim, I am ashamed and saddened that you can [make such proclamations] when the Indians live without running water, with little or no [amenities], living in abject poverty."

"I am ashamed they voted for you, out of fear, and because they were bribed," he added.

The PKR advisor claimed that his party campaigners were not able to enter the private estates, as they were "blocked by Samy's hired thugs and police who acted on his behalf."

Asked later at a press conference on whether he would contest in Sungai Siput, Anwar described the challenge as a "cowardly" move to "used those words" as he has been "denied" of his right to contest.

"However, I heard that Nallakaruppan would be contesting there," he added, referring to PKR Kepong division chairperson and businessman S Nallakaruppan, who signed up with the party late last year.

A reminder

Meanwhile, Anwar rallied the Barisan Alternatif workers by launching the "spirit of Ijok" declaration.

"Ijok should be a reminder of what we are fighting for. The struggle must continue. Now is the time to act!"

"We must fight until we take control of Malaysia to right things. We must rally the people, the Muslims, the Buddhists, the Christians [and all the races]. We must rise to defend the rights of the people," he said.

He also told the crowds that since the 1980s, Malaysia has been dependent on foreign direct investment: "We cannot compare ourselves to other countries that have limited freedom. We cannot act as though we are insulated from the world, because we are not."

PAS deputy president Nasharuddin Mat Isa, PKR vice-president Azmin Ali and treasurer Khalid Ibrahim also spoke at the ceramah.

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