

Pandithan attends MIC meet after 20 years
Malaysiakini.com
May 12, 2007
RK Anand

Nearly 20 years after MIC had shown MG Pandithan the exit, the party's doors once again opened to welcome its former vice-president.

Pandithan, who helms the Indian Progressive Front (IPF), made an unexpected appearance at MIC's 61st general assembly in Kuala Lumpur today.

The frail-looking 67-year-old politician, who is suffering from a serious ailment, was seated on the stage alongside his one time nemesis MIC president S Samy Vellu.

The two veterans ended their feud with an embrace in the run-up to last month's Ijok by-election in Selangor.

"My good friend Pandithan is here (at the general assembly). This has made me very happy. It takes me back tens of years and heralds a new beginning," said Samy Vellu during his opening speech.

Surprises in store

The bad blood between the MIC president and his former vice-president began in 1988 when Pandithan was issued a show-cause letter for allegedly practising caste-oriented politics.

On June 4 the same year, Pandithan started a hunger strike in front of the MIC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, bringing along a coffin to signify that democracy was dead in the party.

This led to his expulsion from the party on July 16, 1988, together with 13 of his supporters. Two years later, he formed IPF.

Meanwhile, Pandithan today said that surprises were in store but remained tight-lipped about them.

"I don't want to say much, but there will be more surprises. I will give a press conference next month.

"Some 20 years ago, I attended the assembly in Malacca as a vice-president and delegate. Now, I am an invited guest," he added.

The burying of the hatchet between Samy Vellu and Pandithan had ignited speculations that their respective parties might decide on a merger.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/67149>