

Cikgu to YB: Parthiban overwhelmed by fame
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"For years, I sat among the delegates and wondered if some day, I would be able to sit among the leaders on the stage. But I never expected it to happen so fast."

These were the words of Ijok state assemblyperson K Parthiban, who is still struggling to come to terms with his newfound fame.

The 61st MIC general assembly was a litmus test for the 38-year-old former school teacher turned politician.

Many wondered if Parthiban - who leapfrogged several senior grass-root leaders to be chosen as the candidate for the April 28 Ijok by-election - would receive a warm reception from the delegates.

As the curtain fell on the MIC assembly, it was safe to conclude that he had turned out to be a hit.

Wherever he went, he was mobbed by people, they shook his hands, took photographs with him and patted him on the back.

Parthiban had become a household name following the media blitz in the run-up to the crucial by-election. In an instant, his life had changed forever.

'It was a shock'

However, the fledgling politician, known for his charming smile and amiable personality, feels overwhelmed by all the attention.

"I am still getting used to this. It is new to me," he told malaysiakini when met at the sidelines of the general assembly yesterday.

"They call me YB (the honorific title of Yang Berhormat) but I just walk past. I don't realise that they are referring to me. It's just that I am so used to being called cikgu (teacher)," he said

Parthiban, who hails from Ladang Raja Musa in Kuala Selangor, said being chosen as the candidate for the Ijok state seat had come as a pleasant shock for him.

"I never expected it to happen. I had (political) ambitions but never thought it would take shape this quickly. I must thank the MIC president (S Samy Vellu) for this," he said, adding that he had entered politics with the intention of serving the people.

According to him, he still meets up with his old friends but his new role as state assemblyperson leaves him with very little spare time.

"I work very long hours now. I go to the office early and leave late. I hardly have any free time," he said.

As for his immediate concerns, Parthiban stressed that he aims to resolve the issues and grouses raised by the people of Ijok as soon as possible.

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