

Verbal fireworks as DAP, Samy clash
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Debating the issue of repairs to government buildings, Parliamentary Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang demanded if Works Minister S Samy Vellu has been “playing the fool for the past 22 years” in his portfolio and 28 years in politics.

“Isn’t it high time that we appoint a new works minister?” prodded Lim (DAP-Ipoh Timur).

“Standards have been stooping lower and lower. If in the past we had a first class mentality, now we are heading towards the third rate mentality and fourth rate development.”

An angry Samy responded: “I feel that it is about time we appoint a new parliamentarian for Ipoh Timur. Whether I’ve been a minister for 22 years, 28 years or even 48 years, it is all because of my capability.”

Lim: “Your leadership is a tragedy to the Indian community, Indians are the underclass, thanks to your leadership. It’s a calamity for them.”

Samy: “You see for yourself the situation of the Indians now. They are doing far better than those days. I have done many projects to improve their (Indians) standard of living. The recent intake for civil servants saw many Indians being employed.”

M Kulasegaran (DAP-Ipoh Barat): “What do you mean, Indians are doing better. Better? They are worse off now!”

Samy refocused his attack, blaming Lim for causing confusion among the Chinese community.

Chong Eng (DAP-Bukit Mertajam) rose to Lim’s defence: “Are they confused? Why do we have MCA then?”

Defective buildings

Earlier, Samy had responded to Dr Mohamed Hayati Othman (PAS-Pendang) who asked him to state the additional allocation for maintenance of government buildings due to various problems. He also asked about the outcome of the investigations into these problems.

Samy explained that problems occur mainly during the construction stages.

“Thus, it does not involve maintenance costs because the buildings are still under the defects liability period,” he said.

He said all maintenance costs are borne by the contractors concerned.

Dissatisfied, Lim asked Samy why he was contradicting himself by saying that maintenance costs are not involved, after having stated that RM22 million will be needed to inspect government buildings in Putrajaya alone.

“Doesn’t this reflect on your irresponsibility?” Lim asked.

Samy replied that Lim should not speak if he does not understand the technicalities involved in maintenance work.

"We have to inspect all government buildings in Putrajaya. We need many engineers to do this and that's why the government needs to fork out RM22 million," he added.

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