

Samy says no to cabinet post
Malaysiakini.com
Mar 12, 2008
Chan Kok Leong

A cooler and more composed MIC president S Samy Vellu, who could even jest when he was told that some Indian NGOs had called for his resignation, emerged today. MCPX

Rejuvenated after his quick "Goodbye" last Saturday after he was unceremoniously dumped by the Sungai Siput voters, the veteran said, "I will resign after they have all resigned. They have all stayed too long too".

samy vellu pc 120308 talkingBefore that, reading from a prepared statement after MIC's Central Working Committee meeting this afternoon, Samy Vellu said that they would continue to work with the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition despite its heavy defeat.

"MIC will work harder in order to win back the Indian community's trust. And we at MIC are committed to help solve any problems before and after the elections with BN."

"The BN government has to work harder to elevate the plight of the Indians and earn their trust once again. There shouldn't be any more delays either in implementing the suggestions MIC has put forward to help the Indians," the 72-year-old politician added.

During the press conference at MIC's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, he also said that MIC's leadership will have to close ranks and work with other Indian-based organisations to help the Indians.

Samy Vellu revealed that he had also met former MIC deputy president Subramaniam to discuss ways to rejuvenate MIC.

But although they had buried the hatchet, he said that there was nothing concrete yet for Subramaniam to rejoin the party leadership.

Similarly, MIC has also opened its doors to Indian NGOs and other Indian parties like IPF to join its ranks.

Besides visiting all its branches nationwide, MIC will also be actively recruiting members below the age of 30.

No senatorship

Fielding questions after that, Samy Vellu said that he did not want any senatorships nor did he want to be a minister via the backdoor (ie senatorship).

"I don't want to be a senator and I don't want to be a minister via a senatorship. I've already got the message from the voters of Sungai Siput and I thank them for it. I've accepted my defeat and that is that. Maybe someone else would accept a senatorship but not me. It's just not me," said Samy Vellu.

samy vellu pc 120308 prejudice"I will now focus my energy on MIC and the problems affecting the Indians as I believe that I can still reunite the Indians. I'm sure I can do this

as I know everyone. I've done this for 42 years and I know my people."

Asked to explain MIC's defeat in this elections, Samy Vellu said that they were not the only ones who lost. "MIC failed, Umno failed and MCA also failed. This is a new wave and it has caused us all to lose."

MIC contested to retain its nine Parliamentary seats and 19 state seats, managing to win only three Parliamentary and seven state seats.

He described the setback as normal as after 40 years (since 1969) of having the same government, people want something different.

"Let those people who have benefited from the system try their hand at governance instead. Unlike politicians elsewhere, voters are very demanding in this country."

"Over the years, we have solved a lot of problems so I hope the candidates who have replaced us can take over our burden and help the people with their problems too."

Three names nominated

On the question of MIC candidates for government posts, three senior officials - Dr S Subramaniam (party secretary general and Segamat MP), K Devamany (central working committee member and Cameron Highlands MP) and M Saravanan (party information chief and Tapah MP) - were nominated.

New face Saravanan, is also the Federal Territory MIC chief, is seen as a favourite to be offered a minister's post.

The battle-scarred politician also dismissed rumours that it was merging with other parties. It will also not disband to become a multi-ethnic party either.

"The question of multi-ethnic parties will not arise until Umno and MCA decide to end race-based systems," he said.

Samy Vellu has been MIC's president since 1979. It is widely speculated that this would be his last term as the party president. The next party polls are due in 2009.

Samy Vellu was the works minister in the last cabinet. He had held that ministerial post on two occasions - from 1979 to 1989 and then again from 1995 until the parliament was dissolved on Feb 13.

In between, he also served as the minister of energy, telecommunications and posts from 1989 to 1995. He made his entry into the government as a deputy minister of local government and housing in 1978 before his promotion to full ministership the following year.