

Exco line-ups : opposition rapped over 'lies'
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RK Anand

MIC president S Samy Vellu today took the opposition to task over the lack of Indians in their state executive councils. MCPX

Responding to a question on multiracial politics, the veteran politician said the newly formed state governments in Penang, Selangor, Perak and Kedah should have given the Indians two exco positions.

"Why only one? Why are they following just like Barisan Nasional (BN)? Is this what they promised before the elections, they have their own motives.

"The opposition tells lies to attract people, we tell the truth. In this last one month, I have learnt one thing, which is how to tell lies to attract voters.

malaysia budget 2007 2008 070907 samy vellu"But I will not resort to this (telling lies) since sooner or later, the people will find out your true colours," he told reporters after opening the MIC divisional leaders workshop on 'Rebranding MIC' at the party's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

According to Samy Vellu, the sole Indian exco members in the four opposition-controlled states will not be able to provide effective representation for the community, especially with BN still controlling the federal government.

"We (MIC) are not into getting the same publicity like the opposition... we will continue to work for the community. The opposition is based on majority. For example, DAP, the Indians are the minority in the party, so don't expect DAP to give two exco seats (for the Indians)," he said.

What about Pahang?

On why the Indians were not given an exco position in the BN-controlled state of Pahang, the MIC president replied: "I will not beg anymore... enough of begging for that and this."

"If the Pahang state government feels it is better off without an Indian in the exco, fine. We have said what we want and it is up to the state government," he added.

Samy Vellu also dismissed the suggestion that MIC is being marginalised in BN.

Touching on his defeat in the March 8 polls, he said the people of Sungai Siput had voted against the ruling coalition and not him.

Describing his former parliamentary constituency as 'heaven', Samy Vellu said he lost despite providing the locals with all the necessary facilities and assistance.

"They (the voters) did not throw me out, they threw BN out. The people said they did not vote against me but against BN," he added.

In the elections, MIC's top echelon was wiped out. The party lost 18 of its 28 seats. Other BN component parties also suffered heavy losses.

Despite this, Samy Vellu is confident that he will be able to rebuild MIC to become stronger than before in a matter of two years.

Quizzed on how long he will remain in power, the 72-year-politician quipped: "Until I die. This is what people are saying, they want me to die earlier."

Samy Vellu said he has already stated when he will step down. "I am not a little boy to keep repeating this."

Prior to the elections, the MIC president of 28 years revealed that this could be his last term.

subramaniam samy vellu and micTo a question on his decision to patch up with his former estranged deputy S Subramaniam which has met with objections from supporters on both sides, Samy Vellu said only a few are disgruntled.

"Only one or two people are against it... I will be going on the ground in the next month or so... we will see then after I explain to them the situation," he said.

Special fund

In his speech earlier, Samy Vellu urged the Prime Minister's Department to establish a special fund and mechanism for the economic growth and equity ownership of the Indian community.

"When I submitted a special request for the upliftment of Malaysian Indians to the prime minister, he advised us to work with the Economic Planning Unit and extract benefits from them.

"Therefore in the field of economic upliftment and equity enlargement, the federal government must assist the Indian community.

"This matter was greatly exploited by the opposition. Although MIC has been working on this matter for a number of years, nonetheless MIC was blamed for not delivering the expected equity and economic growth," he said.

The MIC president also stressed on the need to analyse the performance of the party's branches, divisions and state machineries.

"This is most critical for party effectiveness in the political arena. We must address the situation and make immediate changes. There may be a lack of communication between the branch leaders and the members of the branches.

"This is similar at other levels too. Meetings are not conducted according to rules. Directives from the party headquarters are never read or replied."

New political reality

The MIC president also revealed that an Implementation Coordination Committee (ICC), chaired by him, will be set up to strengthen the party's delivery mechanism.

"The main objective of the ICC is to review and analyse community needs and requests through divisional leaders' submissions," he said.

indian crowd malaysia 291107Samy Vellu also said that MIC is committed to enlarging its educational, social, economic and religious role in addressing the concerns of the Indian community, especially the disadvantaged and marginalised sections.

"MIC recognises that there are many unresolved community concerns. It is in addressing these concerns that MIC has launched an agenda for action to address the socio-economic disadvantages of Malaysian Indians.

"This is a well-thought-out agenda, which is comprehensive and will be implemented with the direct assistance of the federal government," he said.

Samy Vellu conceded that MIC is now facing a new political reality and challenge.

"We must work smart and develop intellectual responses to address the oncoming political attacks. In addition to service, we must develop critical political thinking and enter into public debates on Indian rights and concerns alongside other communities in Malaysia.

"I am confident that MIC can reinvent itself. We have the party machinery and the people. We have to reorient and fully dedicate ourselves to recapture the lost ground.

"May God give us the vision, the strength and the endurance to overcome contemporary political challenges," he said.