

Rebrand the MIC? No, thank you
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In the past week, both MIC president S Samy Vellu and former MIC deputy president Datuk S Subramaniam have announced their new role in revitalising the Malaysian Indian Congress. Samy Vellu has asked Indians to set aside their difference for the sake of the community and Subramaniam said Indians should feel they are part of the party and 'let bygones be bygones'. MCPX

Let 'bygones be bygones'?

Do they really think MIC will be forgiven that easily? Since the wake of Nov 25, 2007. Indians have become aware of the depth of marginalisation and discrimination they have suffered at the hands of the Barisan Nasional ruling parties and in particular the MIC. Alas, when the government at some point accepted the situation of the Indians, they claimed the MIC was responsible. But in the months that followed there was no admission from MIC as to what was happening and they further denied the state of affairs of the Indians.

They refused to sympathise with the plea of the people and kept up an arrogant approach. Thus 'Makkal Sakthi' (People Power) was born. Indians turned their backs on MIC and despised it. A new peaceful movement developed. Many Indians came to realise that MIC had done nothing in protecting the rights of the Indians in this country. There were many who felt the dignity of the Indians had been sold out. The people's anger was finally shown in the elections.

The very basic rights of the Indians on matters of religion, education, wealth and opportunities had slowly eroded. This has been going on for the past 50 years. There was none within the MIC who safeguarded or argued these issues.

Are Samy and Subramaniam now saying, that they (MIC) will voice out the concerns of the Indians, even if it means breaking ranks with BN? These are the issues MIC urgently needs to resolve - not recruiting more members. When the Indians were called 'penyanggak' and 'berok' where was the MIC? Our respect goes to the man who argued and shouted out loudly in parliament that day, demanding that 'an apology be made to the Indians'. His name is Lim Kit Siang and he is not Indian nor is he any part of MIC.

Subra further stated that 'the average Indian wants to become part and parcel of the party'. To the contrary, people want to get away from it. Recruiting new members is not going to solve the problem. MIC needs to address openly the reasons that brought about its downfall - there is no need for post-mortem, the facts are obvious. For people to regain trust in MIC and its leadership, urgent long-term solutions need to be planned and implemented.

Any hope that Samy, Subra, Kayveas or even Abdullah Ahmad Badawi may have in reviving MIC will not happen unless they are able to answer and resolve issues concerning the rights of the Indians. They are:

- * that temples will not be demolished
- * that 'body-snatching' will no longer occur

- * that Islam will not be forced upon the minds of the young non-Muslims in national schools
- * that merit will be used as criteria instead of race
- * that economic plans will benefit the Indians too
- * that a scheme similar to the Felda scheme will be created for the benefit of Indian estate workers
- * that divide and rule, race-based policies like the NEP will come to an end
- * that Malaysia is a secular state and not an Islamic state
- * that there will be no further amendments in the constitution that infringe the rights of the people and that;
- * most of all, a pledge that every citizen regardless of race is the 'son of the soil' (a bumiputera)

Then, there is also the matter of Maika Holdings and the mysterious 'Telekom shares' We are still waiting for an answer. Also, it will be good for all MIC leaders and their cronies to publicly declare their assets. Maybe we should engage the assistance of our new state governments in doing this.

If this cannot be done, than you do not qualify to represent the Indian community. The Indian community is now a mature community and wants to be treated likewise. We are ready to face and fight for our basic rights.

There is no need for new strategies to lure us back. We now act on common sense based on facts and figures. Luring strategies will not work. No sirs, unless all the requirements above are met, there will be no revival of MIC . If it does exist, it will be a ghost from the past and its members only cronies who benefitted from it.

We Makkal Sakthi are now concentrating on moving the Indians forward and guess what? An Indian, for the first time, has just been appointed a deputy chief minister. We have more credible Indians in Parliament. Wow! It's a wonderful feeling! Such progress in such a short span of time, this is what the people want to see. The people's hard work is paying off.

To tell you the truth, there is no want or eagerness for the Indians generally to be part of MIC or any other party representing the Indians (new or already in existence). It's like having suffered a really bad and troublesome relationship and it is now time to recover and start anew. So please leave we Indians alone. Makkal Sakthi is capable of looking after itself.

'A problem cannot be solved by the same hands that created it, MIC cannot be revived by the same persons who destroyed it'.