

Samy tells BN : ignore Indians at your peril
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The government's failure to act on issues concerning the Indian community had led the once loyal supporters of Barisan Nasional (BN) to cast their ballots for the opposition in the March 8 polls. MCPX

This was the message put across by MIC president S Samy Vellu during a press conference at the party headquarters in Kuala Lumpur after chairing the central working committee (CWC) meeting this afternoon.

samy vellu pc 120308 prejudiceThe veteran politician also warned that if the situation is not rectified, it could pave the way for greater losses.

Responding to questions on his call to release the five Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) leaders from detention, Samy Vellu said: "I know how much the Indian community is attached to BN."

"They loved BN! 85 percent ... 85 percent. But we always had to cry for something to be done. If things were done, I don't think they would have moved an inch.

"Now, the whole Indian crowd has moved. Usually, BN gets about 75 percent or 80 percent from the Indian community.

"Now, they have got 45 to 50 (percent). About 35 percent have moved ... If you still don't worry about them, then let God decide-lah, I won't say anything at all," he added.

Nevertheless, the MIC president said the party would continue to tell the Indian community that its future is with the ruling coalition

"When I say that, the BN government must also say and do things (to show) that they care for the community," he added.

Three-hour discussion

As for the CWC meeting, Samy Vellu said the members held a three-hour discussion - peppered with debates and anger - on issues such as equity ownership, employment and loans for businesses.

He said it was decided that a delegation led by the MIC president would meet with Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Amirsham Aziz who oversees the Economic Planning Unit as soon as possible.

Urging the government to act and create more opportunities, Samy Vellu said these are issues close to the heart of the Indian community.

"This was a big challenge for us in the elections. We could not answer many of the questions raised by the opposition because the government did not act on these issues," he added.

On the three percent equity target for the Indian community in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP), Samy Vellu said the equity ownership has dropped to 1.2 percent from 1.5 percent.

"Why did it go down? Because the government did not take the appropriate action. If proper action was taken, this would not have happened. The government did not pay proper attention to this," he said.

Samy Vellu also revealed that he received reports of several figures working in GLCs being told to leave as the 'opportunities' have been given to others.

"This is not the proper system. GLCs only hold the money and investments of the government. So the government must look at this as well," he said.

'This cannot, that cannot'

On Small Medium Enterprise (SME) loans, Samy Vellu said MIC is dissatisfied that a large number of Indian applicants have been turned down.

Quizzed on this, he said: "Many people come and report to us that although they have applied, they do not get the loans."

"There are some who say (they were told) that they are not qualified to apply. This is not right ... these are the officers who say 'this cannot, that cannot' when people apply. In the end, the government gets the bad name," he added.

Samy Vellu also said that numerous quarters have accused MIC of not voicing out issues concerning the community.

"We were voicing out issues even before they (the accusers) were born. All these youngsters who are 21, 22 years old are using blogs to say that we (MIC) have not been doing anything for 27 years.

"But they don't see if there is any validity to their accusations," added the 72-year-old politician who has been helming MIC for 28 years.