

**'Najib must ask Samy to go'**  
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Barisan Nasional runs the risk of losing the Bukit Selambau by-election as long as MIC president S Samy Vellu continues to head the BN coalition party.

If the BN wants to win the state seat in the by-election next month, incoming Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should first remove Samy Vellu as the MIC president.

This was the terse warning issued to Najib by a former strong supporter of Samy Vellu.

"From my data collection of voices from the Indian grassroots nationwide, it is evident the Indian community is rejecting BN because of Samy Vellu," said M Lokanathan, a former Sungai Siput MIC division chairperson.

"If he is allowed to do as he pleases, I bet that the BN will lose the by-election," he added.

Lokanathan was sacked by Samy Vellu from the party after a major fallout last year.

MIC is expected to field its candidate in the by-election on April 7. This will be the party's first test after its humbling defeat in the March 8 general election last year which saw the Indian voters rejecting the party's top leaders, including Samy Vellu in Sungai Siput.

Bukit Selambau was one of the seats which MIC lost last year and it now aims to wrestle the seat again in the by-election.

In order to do so, Samy Vellu spent the last 10 days in the constituency to gauge the support for the party. And his verdict was that the people were ready to embrace MIC again.

However Lokanathan has a different take - he firmly believes that the Bukit Selambau voters were still against Samy Vellu and MIC and would continue to stay away from voting for the party's candidate.

"In fact during the last general election, MIC lost almost all its seats due to the arrogance and stubbornness of Samy Vellu. He cannot deny this, even if he wants to."

**Listen to the grassroots**

Lokanathan said that the BN's only chance to win the Bukit Selambau seat was for Najib to "keep your ears to the ground and listen to the common man".

He added that Samy Vellu had been the stumbling block for the Indian community to prosper with "the cake that the government is offering".

"When one man due to his greed and arrogance tries to take this away, we have no avenue but to appeal to you," added Lokanathan.

He urged Najib to investigate the various failures caused by Samy Vellu that had been detrimental to the community. These included the most recent scandal involving the party's

education arm MIED, the burgeoning cost of the AIMST University, controversy over the Telekom shares and the failure of Maika Holdings.

"If the deputy prime minister wishes to bring BN to the fore, he certainly needs to make a firm decision on Samy Vellu.

"He needs to ensure this leader steps down from the leadership of the MIC," said Lokanathan.

The Bukit Selambau by-election is taking place following the sudden resignation of its incumbent V Arumugam of PKR on Feb 9.

Bukit Selambau has 34,977 voters with about 50 percent of them Malays, 30 percent Indians and 20 per cent Chinese.

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