

Samy Vellu to open IPF meet

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■ **By Sonia Ramachandran**

sonia@nst.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Having ended their 20-year feud, Indian Progressive Front president Tan Sri M.G. Pandithan has invited MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu to open IPF's general assembly.

Pandithan said after chairing the IPF supreme council meeting yesterday that the gesture to invite Samy Vellu to open the assembly on June 24 boded well for the Indian community.

"Samy Vellu invited me as a guest to the MIC general assembly and I want to go one step higher and invite him to open our assembly," said Pandithan at the new RM5

million party headquarters in Serdang.

The bad blood between Samy Vellu and Pandithan began in 1988 when Pandithan, who was the then MIC vice-president, was sacked from the party with 13 supporters for holding a hunger strike in front of the MIC headquarters. They had appeared there with a coffin after being issued a show-cause letter for allegedly practising caste-oriented politics.

In August 1990, Pandithan formed the IPF and its application to join the BN has been rejected every single time, opposed by MIC.

Last month, Pandithan and Samy Vellu decided to bury the hatchet and both their political parties campaigned for the BN in

the Ijok by-election held on April 28. MIC's K. Parthiban won.

"I want to show that we've really forgiven each other and forgotten what has been done in the past.

"I have warned my members who are unhappy with the idea of IPF being friendly with Samy Vellu to behave or leave the party."

On the much talked about merger between IPF and MIC since the mending of ties between the leaders, Pandithan said he would leave the decision to members at the general assembly.

Pandithan, 67, who was diagnosed with cancer last year, said his desire to work with Samy Vellu was because "he had been inspired to do so".