

# 'Parliament House good for more than a century'

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** After its refurbishment, Parliament House can stand for another 100 to 150 years.

This was the assurance given by Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, who said the building's structure was sound since the Public Works Department had supervised its construction.

"The design is complex and modern. It is the first parliament building in the world that will look new at all times," he said after attending the third Social Entrepreneurs Network's (SeNet) Job Fair 2007.

SeNet is a non-governmental organisation established for Indian professionals to spearhead community service. It organises job fairs twice a year. SeNet has so far successfully found work for some 500 job seekers.

Samy Vellu said he preferred the building to remain intact and for parliament to be situated in the city. "If not, we would have moved to a new building in Putrajaya".

He said in light of the problems plaguing the Parliament House, PWD was setting up a special maintenance unit and a report would be submitted to the cabinet within a week.

"I have also directed the PWD director-general to send people from the mechanical, electrical and architectural departments to identify problems. There will be four or five experienced engineers there to supervise maintenance work."

Declining to divulge the cost of refurbishment, he said the repairs included replacing the PVC pipes and waterproofing the roof. Details would be submitted to the cabinet and Finance Ministry.

On the wiring, Samy Vellu admitted that it was last done in 1964.

"During the last renovation, rewiring was confined to the main chambers and the public gallery. But now we will look into the wiring in other parts of the building," he said, adding that to tear down the existing building and construct a new one would cost between RM1.5 billion to RM2 billion.

The minister said the last refurbishment, to the tune of RM90 million, involved improving the interior of the building, including enlarging the chambers and re-carpeting the floors.