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## Samy and Subra bury hatchet for Indian unity The Sun 13/3/2008

**KUALA LUMPUR:** MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu and his former deputy Datuk S. Subramaniam have agreed to bury the hatchet and "let bygones be bygones" for the sake of Indian solidarity in the wake of the party's dismal showing in Saturday's general election.

The two had been at loggerheads for more than 30 years.

"I want to put an end to all the disputes I may have had with Datuk Subra before this. Now is the time to strengthen the party," Samy Vellu said after chairing a meeting of the central working committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body, yesterday.

The MIC supremo, who met with Subramaniam (right) for 90 minutes on Tuesday, also gave him the green light to contest any post in the party elections next year. "Why not, he can contest, no problems."

He (Datuk Subramaniam) has volunteered to give several recommendations to rebuild and reinvent MIC. In fact, he wanted to see me two months ago, but since I was busy, we could not meet.

"Our decision to bury the hatchet and work together has been conveyed to the prime minister (Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi)," he said.

Samy Vellu's gesture in wanting to patch up matters with his one-time bitter foe comes in the wake of poor election results, which sent top MIC leaders tumbling, leaving party support at an all-time low.

The rivalry between the two leaders came to a head when Subramaniam, better known as Subra in MIC circles, was kicked out of the party No. 2 post in the 2006 party elections. With Samy Vellu's blessings, his "blue-eyed boy" Datuk G. Palanivel defeated the long-serving Subramaniam.

in the just-concluded election, MIC candidates suffered an unprecedented defeat, winning only three of nine parliamentary seats.

Besides Samy Vellu, party deputy president Palanivel, vice-presidents Datuk S. Sothianathan and Datuk S. Veerasingham, Youth chief S.A. Vigneswaran and Wanita head Datin Paduka Komala Krishnamoorthy also lost in the election.

The "survivors" are MIC secretary-general Datuk Dr S. Subramaniam (Segamat), information chief Datuk M. Saravanan (Tengah) and CWC member S.K. Devamany (Cameron Highlands).

Samy Vellu has also patched up matters with outspoken People's Progressive Party president Datuk M. Kayveas, who was also defeated in his Taiping parliamentary seat. After being at odds for more than two years, the two leaders spoke to each other after a Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting on Monday and agreed to end the bad blood between them.

"We agreed there should be no more bashing. We will work together from now on for BN's better showing," Kayveas told Bernama.

Samy Vellu also said the MIC would continue to forge closer ties with the Indian Progressive Front and its president Tan Sri M. G. Pandithan.

The MIC chief said he would meet with Indian-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to build a closer rapport with them to regain the trust and confidence of the 1.8 million Indians. "I will also talk to splinter groups in the Indian community and find out their grouses," he stressed.

On the call by certain Indian-based NGOs for him to quit as MIC president, he said: "Let them step down first, then I will go. The NGOs must understand my resignation will not solve the Indian community's woes." - Bernama

