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Tamil dailies debate over Samy Vellu's tenure

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IT has been an interesting two days of reports in Tamil newspapers arguing the merits and demerits of MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu staying on as party chief.

This came in the wake of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urging veteran Barisan Nasional politicians to step down and make way for successors.

The Tamil Nesan, run by Samy Vellu's wife Datin Seri Indrani Samy Vellu, has been urging him in numerous articles to remain at the party's helm.

Malaysian Nanban, operated by people who don't share Samy Vellu's political philosophy, took the tone of the debate a notch higher yesterday when it called on him to vacate the post which he has held for 24 years.

In a stinging editorial that did not mince words, the newspaper said he should follow Dr Mahathir's example in stepping down.

The provocative headline for the editorial "Intending to hold the party post for life ? When are you going to do what you have not done in 24 years?" said it all.

Malaysian Nanban said Samy Vellu and other veteran Barisan Nasional leaders should not make light of Dr Mahathir's example in retiring from his post.

Malaysian Nanban also made reference to People's Progressive Party president Datuk M. Kayveas' statement on Sunday asking Samy Vellu to stay on as party chief, adding it was surprising that Kayveas should be coming to Samy Vellu's rescue.

Meanwhile, MIC Youth chief S. A. Vigneswaran told Tamil Nesan yesterday that the question of Samy Vellu stepping down did not arise as the party leader had much more to contribute to the Indian community in the years to come.