

**Najib's silence on MIC fiasco is deafening**  
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ANALYSIS One and a half months after MIC was ordered by the Registrar of Societies (ROS) to conduct re-elections for its central working committee and vice-president posts, the party is yet to show any indication of adhering to the order.

In fact, party president G Palanivel has, until today, refused to acknowledge errors in the 2013 MIC elections, creating a major fallout within the party with people who want the crisis to be resolved quickly.

**The fiasco inside**

Palanivel had now effectively alienated his own deputy president S Subramaniam, vice-president M Saravanan, and also the current youth chief C Sivaraajh.

The fallout had become so intense that threats of legal action and police reports have been lodged by the warring factions against each other in BN's third largest component party.

On paper, MIC only has over 40 days to conduct a re-election in order to avoid risking de-registration.

They had spent the initial 50 days of ROS' grace period bickering and exposing the widening rift within a party that has been weakened by its two last electoral performances.

But, as the crisis drags on, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had offered nothing but silence on the issue.

There was no statement from him, despite the fact that Palanivel's self-appointed party secretary general G Kumar Aman staged a hunger strike in front of the ROS office late last week.

Members of his own component party had decided to be confrontational towards a prominent government arm - and yet Najib had found no need to act or interfere.

That hasn't always been the case. When the MCA crisis in 2009 threatened to come to a head, Najib met all the warring MCA leaders and brokered a peace deal.

In the run up to the 2013 MIC elections, Najib also brokered a deal to ensure that Subramaniam did not run for party presidency against Palanivel, on the assurance that Palanivel will step down in 2016.

Hence, Palanivel retained his position uncontested.

## **Silence raises serious questions**

But crisis hitting MIC now, with the possibility of deregistration grimly staring at the party, is possibly the worse to have hit a major BN component in Najib's tenure.

Yet, the BN chairman has not ventured forth. Intervening in a component party's crisis is not alien to BN chairpersons. Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad did that during the MCA leadership crisis in 2003.

Najib's silence raises serious questions regarding the MIC crisis, and throws serious doubt on the party's standing within BN.

Has Najib lost faith in MIC and is open to inducting other Indian based parties officially into the BN fold?

MIC had constantly objected to inducting other Indian based parties, such as the Makkal Sakthi party, and the Indian Progressive Front (IPF) from being officially taken into BN.

MIC's possible deregistration will open the floodgates for several Indian based parties to knock on BN's door.

## **Need to put house in order**

Najib's tone at the MIC assembly in 2013 also seemed to indicate that Najib wants MIC to prove itself before demanding for more allocations within the BN fold.

Or Najib too occupied fighting his own battles that he is unaware of the extent of the crisis that has engulfed MIC? The internal Umno strife, especially between his camp and those aligned to former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, has been dominating headlines.

The economic situation of the country, that has prompted Najib to announce budget revisions, is also another cause for concern.

Much of the crisis in MIC has been attributed to a lack of leadership on Palanivel's part, as he continues alienating party members instead of attempting to close ranks.

As Palanivel's lack of leadership glares in the MIC crisis, the shadow also reflects very much on the need for Najib to stand up and put BN into order.

Probably Najib can begin with MIC?

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