

Storm brewing over Murugiah's entry into MIC
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Several MIC central working committee (CWC) members are strongly opposed to controversial deputy minister T Murugiah's entry into the party, said party sources.

The objections were raised during a special CWC meeting yesterday and during the monthly CWC meeting today.

The opposing views focused on Murugiah's tainted history.

NONEMurugiah (right) had tried to oust PPP president M Kayveas in May last year by holding a controversial emergency general meeting (EGM) and declaring himself party president.

This was followed by a year-long legal and verbal battle which saw Murugiah losing in the end. Since then, Murugiah has been a deputy minister in the prime minister's department without a party.

"Some CWC members are worried that Murugiah might pull another number here," said a source.

Others questioned whether the party now has to accommodate Murugiah with a high-ranking party position and extend his senatorship when it expires next year.

A request from PM?

Murugiah's senatorship was of particular concern because it would come with a deputy minister's post and may cost other senior MIC leaders the position.

"I raised the issue of his senatorship, which expired in April. I said that if the prime minister wants to renew his senatorship, that is his prerogative, but it shouldn't be from MIC's quota," said another source.

mic agm 110710 s samy vellu 3"The prime minister has his own special quota. There are much older party members who have served for years so Murugiah, as he is new, shouldn't be considered for MIC's senatorship."

In a press conference after the CWC meeting today, MIC president S Samy Vellu (left) had endorsed Murugiah's entry, even to the extent of describing him as a "useful" person.

But sources claim that in private, Samy Vellu had lamented that Murugiah's entry into the MIC was a "request" by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

It's been said Murugiah is backed by Najib and that his ability to hang on to his deputy minister's post is evidence of this.

Najib's Trojan horse?

Another theory is that Murugiah has been sent into MIC by Najib in order to create problems for Samy Vellu. It is no secret that Najib sees Samy Vellu as a liability for BN.

"Samy Vellu has been consistent all this while that he was not interested in Murugiah. What could have caused him to change his mind overnight?" a highly-placed source pondered aloud.

The Gerakan Anti-Samy (GAS) movement, also allegedly linked to Umno, had tried over the past few weeks to force Samy Vellu to step down, but failed miserably.

Publicly, some party leaders chose to issue guarded welcome statements for Murugiah.

"We felt that the party can be strengthened and at this point of time it would be good to have new members... but we are too aware of the potential pitfalls.

"Murugiah had some problems in PPP, but it should not be a problem in MIC as he will become a new and ordinary party member," said CWC member Madhu Marimuthu.

teng chang yeowAfter losing several legal to be reinstated as a PPP member, Murugiah had publicly stated that he was considering joining either Gerakan or MIC.

When contacted today, Gerakan secretary-general Teng Chang Yeow (left) confirmed that there was never a formal application by Murugiah to join the party.

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