

Murugiah 'risks losing MIC membership'
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T Murugiah may well have fallen out of the frying pan into the fire, after his admission into MIC last month following his tumultuous departure from PPP.

His new party is said to have issued him an ultimatum to bring in the 210,000 supporters that he had claimed were with him in PPP, or risk losing his membership.

A MIC source claimed that a condition set for Murugiah's acceptance was that he would bring along these supporters to shore up membership and to strengthen the party's eroding influence among Indian Malaysians.

NONEWhen contacted, Murugiah - a deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department and a senator - declined to comment.

"I leave it to my party president (S Samy Vellu) to comment on the matter. I will not answer the allegations of others as there is an understanding among BN component parties not to publicly attack members of other parties," he said, sounding irritable.

However, the source said the MIC central working committee had, at a recent meeting, decided to give him two weeks to effect the transfer of supporters.

Murugiah, who headed PPP Youth, had been involved in an outright leadership tussle with party president M Kayveas, losing out when the Registrar of Societies ruled that the latter is the legitimate head.

After being sacked by PPP, Murugiah found himself in limbo as no other BN component party wanted to take him in.

s velpaari anak lelaki s samy velluHe applied to MIC, but top party leaders were not agreeable to his admission. He then turned to Samy Vellu's son, Vel Pari (left), to argue his case.

The source said Samy agreed to Murugiah's membership, provided that he is able to pull in his supporters.

Murugiah's membership has been opposed by some MIC leaders who see him as a threat both to their political survival and to party unity, as they fear that PPP's troubles may be transferred to the party, said the source.

Need for membership

Murugiah is required to have a BN party base if his tenure as senator is to be renewed for another two-year term after the first term expires next April.

samy vellu and mic 160408A day after Samy Vellu announced his entry as an ordinary member in MIC, Murugiah stepped on the toes of leaders when he reportedly said there is no one to take over from the party president.

Murugiah also reportedly said he would leave it to his supporters to decide whether or not to join MIC, again leaving many party leaders irked.

The situation has since become murky because of a media statement by BN Supporters Club vice- president Dr R Muruga Raj on July 25.

Muruga Raj said those of Murugiah's supporters who want to join MIC could go ahead , but that the rest could wait for a new party, Satu Malaysia, to be registered.

Saying that he will head the new party, Muruga Raj added that it would apply for direct membership in BN.

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