

## Sikh leader quits Malaysian Indian Congress

Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) vice president Karnail Singh Nijhar, the highest ranking Sikh in the Tamil-dominated party, has quit after a fallout with party chief S. Samy Vellu.

Nijhar declined to comment on his resignation, saying the party would make the announcement shortly, the New Straits Times reported Thursday.

Nijhar stormed out of the party office May 15 after the removal of party leader S. Subramaniam. News cameraman waiting outside saw he was 'visibly upset' and news reports quoted him as saying: 'How can you be so cruel? How can you simply sack a man?'

Nijhar's disagreements with Vellu are well-known. He was dropped from the nominees' list for the general election in March after he represented Subang in parliament from 2004 to 2008.

Some MIC sources said Nijhar had made way for younger leaders as part of plans to revamp the organisation, something Vellu had spoken about earlier this month.

There are an estimated 100,000 Sikhs in Malaysia.

MIC has traditionally spoken for the 2.6 million Malaysian Indian community, but lost ground badly in the March election. Vellu himself lost his ninth bid for re-election.

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