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# Chan decides to quit race in shock move

MYSTERY surrounds the sudden withdrawal of legislator Mr Jackie Chan Chai-keung yesterday.

He was one of two candidates to stand down yesterday, the other being businessman Mr Gary Ahuja, a Yau Tsim District Board member.

Mr Chan's unexpected withdrawal could mean an abrupt end to his political career. Observers say he feared defeat following the last-minute entry of a district board member into his constituency.

Mr Kingsley Sit Ho-yin, a Tuen Mun District Board member, only gave notice on Tuesday to fight the Kowloon South constituency which Mr Chan represents.

Along with Mr Ng Kin-sun and Mr Tao Kwok-lau, Mr Sit was one of three candidates to file their nomination papers in the constituency on the same day, dashing Mr Chan's hopes of an uncontested victory.

Mr Chan was last night unavailable for comment although last week he was said to have complained about a high turnover of staff at his fire equipment company and he told friends he wanted to devote more time to his business.

It appears that Mr Sit had the backing of Mr Tao, who is listed as one of Mr Sit's five nominators.



**TWO of the 48 candidates for the September polls withdrew from the race yesterday, one day after nominations closed. ANDY HO and BELLETTE LEE report.**

Mr Sit said: "He may have quit because he thought the votes might have been split among Mongkok District Board members which would have affected his chances of winning."

There is nothing to prevent candidates in the electoral college from standing outside their districts as long as they have the backing of five nominators in the area they want to represent.

Mr Sit defended his decision to stand in South Kowloon. "I have friends in the area and have participated in several activities there so I see no reason not to stand."

Mr Sit is president of the

Boy Scouts' Association in the Yau Tsim-Mongkok area.

Sources said Mr Chan may have quit out of frustration over the strategy used by his opponents to reduce his share of votes and any edge he may have had in winning.

One observer said: "He could have been upset at board members who are clearly prepared to back an outsider and not one of their own."

However, colleagues said there was no indication that Mr Chan was frustrated by politics and had planned to run in 1991 when direct elections are introduced.

Election officials were equally baffled yesterday over Mr Chan's withdrawal.

They said candidates did not have to provide reasons for standing down.

Mr Chan has been identified with a small group of liberal legislators in the council since indirect elections were introduced three years ago.

Last November he threatened to quit over what he felt was the inability of councillors to take a more critical stance over the Daya Bay nuclear power plant.

● A total of 33 people are now left to contest 13 seats. The remaining 13 seats, which are reserved for indirectly elected legislators, have been returned unopposed.