

Open Letter to the Public

“926 Save Chinese Education Campaign” launched by Dong Zong

Chinese education in Malaysia has been encountering numerous long-standing unresolved problems. The situation has deteriorated significantly in recent years due to the emergence of new issues. In view of the seriousness of this state of affairs, Dong Zong held the “325 Rally to Save Chinese Education” on 25 March 2012, in which more than 10,000 people have attended at the Dong Jiao Zong Higher Learning Centre in Kajang. The Rally adopted 4 resolutions including urging the Government to take prompt action to resolve the teacher shortage problem, to review the Education Act and to implement multi-culturalism and plurality in the educational policy.

After awaiting for more than 20 years, the Chinese community in Kuantan and Segamat finally organised the 520 (May 20th) Rally and the 729 (July 29th) Rally respectively demanding the establishment of an independent high school in Kuantan and Segamat. The large turnout of more than 12,000 people at these 2 rallies reflected the urgent need and wishes of the Chinese community pertaining to Chinese education. Besides, the Chinese primary schools’ board of directors have been facing difficulty in getting themselves registered. In some schools, serious erosion or even usurpation of authority of the board of directors happened.

A memorandum entitled “The Stands and

Demands of the 7 Chinese Associations on Educational Issues” dated 8 August 2012 was submitted to the Prime Minister Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak. The memorandum raised 15 issues and 49 demands urging the Government to resolve problems currently faced by Chinese education as well as to grant fair and equitable treatment to the establishment and development of Chinese education.

The primary objective of Dong Zong in launching this “926 Save Chinese Education Campaign” is to submit a petition urging the Prime Minister Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak to address and resolve problems currently faced by Chinese education.

Since the appointment of Datuk Dr Wee Ka Siong as the Deputy Minister of Education, Dong Zong has been actively interacting with him hoping that he will carry out his duty conscientiously and will help resolve some of the long-standing problems faced by the Chinese education. However, the Deputy Minister proved to be a great disappointment to us. On many Chinese education issues, not only did he fail to show his sincerity in discussing with us and finding solution to the problems, but he had also tried to defend his wrongdoing. Being flip-flop in attitude, he even attempted to be provocative which was clearly unbecoming of a Deputy Minister. Dr Wee also tried to politicize the education issue

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and deliberately suppressed the Chinese educational organizations and the Chinese education activists. For instance,

1. Although Chinese primary schools had badly hit by a serious shortage of teachers for decades and no solution has been found thus far, Dr Wee continues to make misleading statements to defend the unfair practices of the authorities.
2. A large number of teachers without Chinese qualifications are still being sent to the Chinese primary schools while problems of temporary teachers remain unresolved. This has aggravated the teacher shortage problem in Chinese primary schools.
3. Dr Wee wildly alleged that he was assaulted at the 325 Rally but later changed his story to say he was never assaulted. He then laid the blame on media for purposes of diverting attention from his own responsibility.
4. Dr Wee alleged that the newly approved Sekolah Menengah Chong Hwa Kuantan was a Chinese independent high school whereas the approval letter clearly showed that it was a private Malay school. When the applicant requested amendments to the wordings of the approval letter, Dr Wee said it was immaterial whether or not the Education Ministry should reply to the request. This is highly misleading and irresponsible.
5. On the issue of registration of the Chinese primary schools' board of directors, Dr Wee said: "I have responded six times. Just submit your application form to the District Education Office, the registration will automatically be deemed valid upon acknowledgement of receipt of the application form by the officer". However, incidents continue to happen in many Chinese primary schools where the application for registration of the school board of directors received no acknowledgement from the District Education Office. More so, usurpation of authority of the board of directors took place in many schools including SJK(C) Jinjang Utara, Kuala Lumpur.
In the Education Ministry, Dr Wee is entrusted with the duty of handling matters relating to Chinese education. Not only has he failed to resolve the Chinese education issues, he has even exacerbated the problems and seriously jeopardized the interest of Chinese education. His serious breach of duty warrants his resignation from his post as Deputy Education Minister.
Dong Zong appeals to all Malaysian who support Chinese education to be present outside the Parliament House at 11am on 26 Sep 2012 to participate the "926 Save Chinese Education Campaign" as well as to take part in the signature campaign in order to strive for the interest of Chinese education.