

**Hua Zong votes to abort Suqiu 2.0 project**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Disember 17, 2010**

Hua Zong, the umbrella body for Malaysian Chinese associations, yesterday stuck to its decision to dissolve the secretariat for one of its ambitious projects - the 20-Year Plan of Action for Malaysia.

Established before the 1999 general election, the Malaysian Chinese Organisations Election Appeals Committee, or Suqiu 2.0 as it has been labelled, was effectively aborted on a 23-4 vote passed at Hua Zong's central committee meeting.

The four bodies that voted against the decision, the KL & Selangor, Seremban, Johor and Penang Chinese Assembly Halls, vowed to press on with the project on their own.

klscyh protect peaceful society pc 140607 tan yew sing middleThe project was headed by KL & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (KLSCAH) chief Tan Yew Sing (right), who had invited three prominent scholars - Lim Teck Ghee, Toh Kin Woon and Wong Chin Huat - to draft the final report.

The aim was to gather civil society views and suggestions on major national issues on social, environmental, cultural, educational, economic and political perspectives. When completed, the plan was to publish and distribute the report to government and private agencies.

However, a dispute erupted when the draft report was seen to be too aggressive, with Hua Zong secretary-general Chua Yee Yen demanding that parts of the report be amended or deleted.

Among the controversial sections were those pushing for the abolishment of the ISA and sedition laws, and the call for the revival of local government elections.

The demands were rejected by the project committee members, who said the requested changes would lead to national regression. But the project's proponents defended the proposals, saying far from being radical, they reflected the popular views of civil society.

The project committee members also expressed worry that their report would not get published and end up in cold storage.

'Move to avoid offending the BN government'

NONEDuring Hua Zong's Nov 27 central committee meeting, its president Pheng Yin Huah (left in photo) announced that the project secretariat would be dissolved as it had "accomplished its duty".

He also said the project's remaining tasks would be handed over to the sub-committees of Hua Zong.

Pheng's announcement drew a firestorm of criticism as no vote had been called on the issue and hence due process was not observed. As protests and criticisms poured in, some

commentators saw the move as an attempt to avoid offending the BN government.

Set up before the 1999 general election, Suqiu put forward 17 demands on behalf of the Chinese community.

But then prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad in August 2000 likened Suqiu to the "communists in the past" who wanted to abolish the Malays' special position in Malaysia.

Umno Youth then staged a protest in front of the KLSCAH, forcing Suqiu to drop some of its demands.

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/151039>