

'M'sia nowhere without Chinese business community'

Malaysiakini.com

November 3, 2011

by Aidila Razak

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today lauded the Chinese business community for being significant contributors to Malaysia growth.

“For a long time, our local Chinese businessmen have been our main domestic investors and it would be safe to say that without them, Malaysia wouldn’t be where it is today,” he said, to applause.

Speaking at the Third World Chinese Economic Forum in Serdang, Selangor, Muhyiddin urged the community to now link arms with the bumiputera community for the nation’s future.

He said the community should also support the government-linked companies that have “increasingly over the last 10 years or so (have made) more and more domestic investments”.

“I call upon the Malaysian Chinese business community to continue to be our partners in development, invest in our economy and join forces with both GLCs and bumiputera businessmen to play your part in the next stage of development,” he said.

Commenting on this at a session later, MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek said that the government should give priority to “genuine Sino-bumiputera partnerships”.

“When the government tenders projects, genuine Sino-bumiputera partnerships must be given an advantage, as this will promote genuine partnership and no Ali Baba companies,” he said.

‘Vernacular education helps economy’

In his opening speech at the Third World Chinese Economic Forum earlier, Chua argued that vernacular education, particular in Mandarin, would play a major role in growing the economy.

NONEHe said that this was due to the emergence of China as a world economic superpower.

“Emphasising mother tongue education is not just for cultural reasons. It is also because of the immense economic potential that comes with it.

“For us to embark on more collaborations with (Chinese-speaking nations) we need to encourage Malaysians to be multi-lingual in Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mandarin,” he said.

Elaborating on this at the press conference, Chua said the study of languages should not be looked at from a racial or political aspect.

“When I speak in English, does it mean that I am pro-Mat Salleh?

“All three languages are important to enable us to acquire more knowledge; no race should be monolingual,” he said.

He said Malaysia’s trade with Chinese-speaking countries now accounted for 20 percent of its total trade of about US\$2.5 trillion a year, while trade with China alone last year was US\$45.6 billion.