

Datukship does not equal wealth, says Chua
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Being a datuk does not mean that the person is well-off, MCA president Chua Soi Lek said when commenting on the issue of Bera MCA division chairman recently receiving RM500 in aid under the BR1M programme.

Tang Hock Lock, (below) a well-known philanthropist in Triang, Pahang, had sparked outrage on the Internet when he admitted that he had applied and received the aid meant for individuals with a combined household income of less than RM3,000.

Addressing the issue after opening the 'Malaysian Chinese at the Political Crossroads' conference today, Chua said many people were conferred datukship when they were young, which might not reflect their current financial status.

"But when they grow older and older, they become less and less wealthy. We see it everyday," he said.

He added that different people will have different definitions of being rich.

"Some people think they are rich because they have RM10 million, but for billionaires, this is just pocket money," he said.

Tang unknown to his president

Should Tang be qualified for the aid? Chua said, he should get it, if not he should be punished.

Chua, (right) however, stressed that he did not have the full facts of the case, so he would refrain from commenting on the party's stand on the matter for the moment.

Tang has since donated the money to a disabled villager, and blamed the opposition for sensationalising the issue as he is considered a "winnable candidate" in the DAP stronghold seat in southwest Pahang.

Asked on Tang's claim, Chua said he "does not even know" him.

The grassroots leader yesterday told Malaysiakini that he applied for BR1M cash with the intention of donating to others.

He added that he had transferred all his assets to his children and is without any income now.

However, it is learnt that Tang runs a sundry shop in his hometown and was once involved in property development.