

Sin Chew Daily attacked for 'biased' debate coverage
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After 'Ms Tow Truck', local Chinese daily Sin Chew Daily has become the target of attack by netizens in the aftermath of last Saturday's debate between MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek and DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng.

This is, netizens say, because of Sin Chew Daily's "biased coverage" of the debate, which gave prominent coverage to Chua in yesterday's edition of the newspaper.

This has forced the widely circulated Chinese daily to make repeated explanations on Facebook - but the newspaper has not been able to satisfy its critics.

In its Sunday edition, Sin Chew Daily gave a general write-up of the arguments of Chua and Lim on the front page, but other pages, including pages 2, 3 and 4, only highlighted Chua's and other BN leaders' speeches.

Lim's speech was reported on page 31, the second-last page in the newspaper.

Editor denies bias

This led to criticism from netizens on Sin Chew Daily's Facebook, with the paper being accused of being biased towards Chua.

"Sin Chew Daily reported Chua's news with big coverage, while Lim's news only got little coverage. Protest Sin Chew Daily's biased practice," a Facebook user with the surname Tan lamented.

netizen bombard sin chew facebook page 2"Sin Chew Daily cheated its readers," said another Facebook user Samc Chen, who also described this as enjo kosai, a Japanese term for "compensated dating".

DAP national election publicity bureau chief Hew Kuan Yau has come under fire recently for using the term enjo kosai on some local reporters who he said, on his Facebook page, acted as "hired pens on behalf of local BN leaders".

'For the readers' convenience'

In response, Sin Chew Daily executive editor in chief Kuik Cheng Kang denied the accusation on his Facebook yesterday afternoon.

Kuik explained that the editorial board had in fact given fair coverage to both Chua and Lim.

"Pages 2 and 31 are on the same sheet of the paper... we let Chua and Lim lead the headlines on each side.

"Hence, it is not correct to said we are biased towards Chua. I hope everyone can understand our efforts."

Kuik also explained that Sin Chew Daily published more reports on what Chua said on page 4 because the MCA president had made another speech during an earlier session of the conference.

However, this explanation has not been accepted by most Facebook users, with many of them posting comments on the wall to criticise the daily's coverage of the debate.

Late yesterday afternoon, the administrator of Sin Chew Daily's Facebook page had posted an internal

circular from the newspapers group's editor-in-chief, which promised that matter would be thoroughly reviewed.

The circular also promised that the newspaper would be a correction in today's issue of the paper.

"In the past, Sin Chew Daily has always split the front page to two sides to present the arguments of both side fairly. Why does the editorial board lack sensitivity this time?"

"Those involved (in this coverage) should make a thorough post-mortem... We should make a correction in tomorrow's newspaper."

More space for Guan Eng today

In today's issue, Sin Chew Daily published an article by deputy editor in chief Chen Yoke Lin in its I-exchange column, reiterating that they are listening to the critics seriously.

Ceng also said it was challenging for the newspaper to be balanced in reporting the views from different sides, but that they would always try hard to do so, and that they were always willing to listening to readers' comments.

Sin Chew also published two pages of reports on the Penang CM and DAP - including refuting the accusations by MCA Selayang division coordinator Jessie Ooi, dubbed 'Ms Tow Truck' by netizens - stressing that the assessment for Penang has not gone up since the last general election.

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