

Chinese schools here to stay, says Najib to MCA cheers

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Koh Jun Lin

Despite calls seen during the Sept 16 'red shirt' rally to abolish Chinese vernacular schools, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has reaffirmed that these schools are here to stay.

"That is not BN policy," he said, to a thunderous applause from MCA delegates at Wisma MCA.

"BN stands for policies based on multiculturalism, multilingualism, multiethnicism and multireligionism. That is BN.

"This is not decided by me. This has already been decided by our forefathers.

"We have moved for so long in this direction; we have achieved much in this country," he said when officiating MCA's annual general meeting today.

He was likely responding to the matter that MCA president Liow Tiong Lai (photo) raised in his preceding opening speech.

The abolition of Chinese vernacular schools and the formation of single stream schools were among the issues raised at the Himpunan Maruah Melayu rally.

Proponents to the call - such as Perkasa and the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Wahid Omar - had argued that single stream schooling would improve racial harmony, as students from different ethnic groups would have to study together from a young age.

'Chinese vernacular schools will be defended'

However, in his speech this morning, Liow vowed in Najib's presence that MCA will defend Chinese vernacular schools, and also outlined some of MCA's efforts to improve them, including improving the students' command of the Malay and English languages.

"The multi-stream system has been in place since the formulation of Malaysia.

"Malicious calls to eliminate the system are unacceptable, as this will only serve to undermine the foundation of our nation's education system," he said.

Najib, who is also the BN chairperson, said that Malaysians must uphold the national consensus that is the 'social contract', which in turn has been translated into the federal constitution and the laws of Malaysia.

"We must remain steadfast in our belief to the social contract, and the federal constitution.

“We did not go for assimilation; we went for integration. That was the wisdom of our forefathers,” he said.

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