

PM: Tee Yong chosen based on merit
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today defended the appointment of Labis MP Chua Tee Yong as deputy agriculture and agro-based industries minister.

Najib said that he had screened through a list of potential appointees and found that Tee Yong had fulfilled the criteria to fill the post.

"We went through the list, and it doesn't matter that his father is the president (of MCA)," said the premier after his walkabout in SS2, Petaling Jaya (above).

"One has to be a responsible member of the administration, and support and strengthen government policy... I am confident in his ability," he added.

Press further, Najib said that an individual's ability was the main criteria and not age, citing his own experience.

"I was appointed a deputy minister at 25 and as a menteri besar at 29," he said.

Tee Yong, 33, is a political greenhorn who contested and won the Labis parliamentary seat in March 2008. The seat was previously held for four-terms by his father and MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek.

Nepotism?

Following Soi Lek's election as party president, Tee Yong received a massive boost in his political fortunes. He was first appointed to the MCA central committee and then to the presidential council, leapfrogging far more experienced party members.

In contrast, Najib again overlooked Umno Youth chief and Rembau MP Khairy Jamaluddin for a cabinet position, despite him being part of the top echelon of the youth wing for several years.

chua tee yong interview 110309 04 Tee Yong's appointment has sparked further grumbling within MCA over his meteoric rise and charges of blatant nepotism.

Earlier today, Soi Lek told reporters that there were currently 15 MCA MPs and only Tee Yong (left) and Gelang Patah MP Tan Ah Eng's were available for nomination. He claims that both names were submitted for Najib's consideration.

On Pakatan Rakyat's rally against Israel on Friday, Najib shook his head when asked if BN would join the rally and said the federal government will instead table a motion when the Dewan Rakyat convenes on Monday to condemn Israel's attack on several Gaza-bound humanitarian aid ships.

Crime rate will go down

Najib also expressed confidence that the government can reduce crime rate by five percent by the end of the year, to meet his National Key Results Area (NKRA) targets.

NONENajib said that among measures to beef up security was through the employment of 4,279 civilians to relieve 7,402 police personnel from administrative work and concentrate solely on tackling crime.

“Public confidence has improved. During my chat with the locals (during the walkabout), they say they feel safer and are more confident that their security is guaranteed.

“It shows that police presence is a very effective deterrent,” he said.

Najib added that they intend to make Selangor as a showcase state for the federal government's success in crime reduction.

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