

**Taiping race heats up, Kayveas fights back**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Mar 04, 2008**  
**Andrew Ong**

M Kayveas, who has been fighting a desperate battle to retain his Taiping parliamentary seat, announced today that he had secured a new plot of land for a Chinese school.  
MCPX

But barely one hour after the announcement, challenger Nga Kor Ming held a press conference of his own where he dismissed Kayveas' surprise announcement as a "bluff".

In 2004, Kayveas had pledged to obtain a plot of land for SJK (C) Hua Lian 2, which has been operating from the premises of another school - SJK (C) Hua Lian 1 - for about 30 years.

At present, both schools have reached saturation point and are alternating between morning and afternoon sessions to accommodate their students - about 2,000 in all.

This has become one of the major election issues for Taiping, which Nga cited as an example of how Kayveas had allegedly failed to fulfill his pledges.

At a short ceremony in SJK (C) Hua Lian 2 today, Kayveas told the school board that the land office had approved an application for a 2.86 acre land adjacent to the present school.

He said a letter on the matter had been issued on Feb 25, which was coincidentally a day after nomination day, and a copy was handed to the school board today.

**Letter 'not legally binding'**

At his press conference, Nga told reporters that the letter was not legally binding and the matter would still require approval from the Perak state government and Education Ministry.

Nga, who is also defending his position as two-term Pantai Remis assemblyperson, warned that the approval given by the Land Office was not a grant or a land title, and stressed that this could be cancelled at any time.

"Show me the grant or the land title and I will stop making noise," said Nga, 35, who is a practicing lawyer and two-term Pantai Remis assemblyperson.

Contacted later for a reaction, Kayveas said Nga was "talking rubbish" and should understand the contents of the letter as a lawyer.

"To me, the Land Office have given its consent for the land to be gazetted as part of the existing school. The district officer clearly had no objections and the matter would be approved by the state exco," said Kayveas, 54, who himself is a trained lawyer.

Kayveas added that he was disappointed by Nga's negative reaction to the announcement as he should be happy for the Chinese community.

## **Close fight expected**

Kayveas, who is the sole PPP candidate contesting for a parliamentary seat, is fighting hard to fend off a strong challenge from Nga, who represents the opposition DAP.

Both candidates are frantically canvassing for Chinese votes which make up 50 percent of the total 65,889 voters.

In recent days, Nga has pulled bigger and bigger crowds at his ceramah around town which many attribute to his youthful exuberance, excellent oratory skills and poster-boy good looks.

Kayveas, on the other hand, is telling voters that he had delivered his promises after he was elected in 2004, barring a few minor issues, and would continue to bring more economic development to the town.

Initially, bookmakers had tipped Kayveas to win by 5,000 votes on nomination day. Word on the ground a week later was that the odds were even.

With only four more days to polling, both candidates are expected to fish for votes among the Malay and Indian voters in Kamunting, which forms the bulk of non-Chinese voters in the Taiping parliamentary seat.

Kayveas became PPP's first MP in more than a decade when he beat DAP's Ong Chee Keng by 2,172 votes in a three-cornered fight four years ago. On paper, the opposition could have taken the seat in 2004 should there be a straight fight.

A win for Nga will break Barisan Nasional's 30-year unbeaten streak in Taiping.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/79157>