

50 years of Chinese school problems fuels anger at rally
The Malaysian Insider
March 25, 2012

KAJANG, March 25 — The angry reaction to Datuk Wee Ka Siong at a rally opposing the shortage of Chinese school teachers here is the result of 50 years of frustration, say protestors.

The deputy education minister was greeted with loud jeers calling for him and MCA to step down when he arrived, and someone in the crowd had allegedly tried to punch him as he was being chased out by the crowd when the rally ended.

Dr Wong Fort Pin (picture) from Malacca said he made the two-hour drive to lend his voice to the anger over the government's track record over the hot button issue of Chinese language education.

"This is a 50-year-old problem," the father of five told The Malaysian Insider. "This problem has been here all along. It feels engineered (by the government) and a calculated move."

He said that he was not politicising the issue but felt "fed-up" and frustrated.

"You think I have no better things to do than to come here?" he said. "For 50 years the issue has been going on, but now the government cannot hide."

Chinese schools and issues that plague them are key to the hearts of many Chinese-educated Malaysians.

The issue is also a thorny one for Umno, MCA's senior partner in Barisan Nasional, as it has to be seen as championing the Malay language and national government schools.

For Serdang resident Tan, the issue was that a new Chinese school had been promised for Serdang in 2008 but had yet to materialise.

"Until now there is still no news of the location," he said.

Tan claimed that he had emailed Wee on the matter but had not received a reply to date.

"I am so sad there was no reply," he said but added that he was glad that Wee made the effort to attend the rally.

Later at a press conference at a hotel away from the crowd, Wee said that he was "shocked" and "saddened" by the hostile reaction.

Wee acknowledged that the shortage of teachers was a problem and said that the government was giving it immediate attention.

"Of course we know this needs immediate attention, that's why the cabinet formed a

committee (to look into it)", he said.

"We will study each of their (Dong Zong's) resolutions and demands and consider it. We have come up with strategies."

He urged patience as the solution needed to be a holistic one.

"We need to identify the root of the problem. If we don't know the root, how are we going to solve it? We cannot concentrate on one side and ignore the other side."

The Malaysian Insider

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Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/demonstrators-protest-over-shortage-of-chinese-teachers-for-50-years/>