

Wee continues war of words with Education Ministry over varsity intake
Malaysian Insider
Aug 4 , 2013
BY RITA JONG

Former education deputy minister Datuk Wee Ka Siong today fired another salvo at the Education Ministry (MoE) for misquoting him on the local university intake issue.

The MCA Youth chief said the ministry should verify and not misconstrue his arguments on the intake system. In the ministry's statement on Friday, Wee was alleged to have said that only 19% of Chinese students received offers to IPTAs, but many Chinese students with a CGPA of 4.0 did not receive any offer.

"This is utterly baseless. The ministry must verify its sources of information as I have never uttered such a remark before," said Wee in a statement in Kuala Lumpur after arriving from Beijing with other party leaders.

"There might have been a wrong translation of what I said. MoE should carry out a detailed investigation and not take my words out of context."

Wee clarified that he had said: "In the past four years, the enrolment rate of Chinese applicants fell from 92% to 88.2%, followed by 86.4% to only 75% this year."

That data, he said, was obtained from the ministry itself or from the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE).

Wee, who is also the party's education bureau chairman, wanted to set the record straight and gave a point-by-point rebuttal of the MoE's statement on Friday.

MoE had said that only 39 students with a Culmulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 4.0 failed to receive offers from IPTA.

This, he said, must not be taken lightly.

"It is unjust to students who scored the perfect CGPA of 4.0 but were offered courses that were not their chosen option, more so when the applicants had clearly indicated their interest by choosing critical courses as their top priorities during the online application," he said.

"MoE also did not consider the problem encountered by these students who applied for Dentistry and Pharmacy. The existing system requires students to select at least six options. The number of existing IPTAs which offer these courses (Dentistry and Pharmacy) is fewer than six, thereby forcing students to apply for other courses in the system."

Hence, Wee said, the Higher Education Section of the MoE has been evasive and failed to look into this matter comprehensively, thus leaving top scoring CGPA 4.0 students in a dilemma.

He added that MoE claimed only 1% of students with the high score did not receive offers and even listed the reasons, including the applicants having stated they would decline programmes other than the ones they applied for, and being at the low merit level as the co-curricular activities marks were low.

"There is a difference in the evaluation system for co-curricular activities between the STPM and Matriculation applicants. Also, the information as prepared by MCA proves that there are at least two students with a CGPA of 4.0 who are willing to accept courses which were not selected by them, but still failed to obtain any course," said Wee.

"For the past 10 years, the MCA Youth Education Bureau has been helping MoE and MoHE to conduct out-reach programmes and providing guidance talks to students on improving their opportunities to gain entry into IPTAs based on the criteria set by the ministries.

"If the intake results do not match the selection criteria set, the MoE owes these students a reasonable explanation as to how their applications have failed to fulfil the ministry's requirements."

Wee also slammed the MoE's release of the press statement without first looking into the matter seriously.

He said students are unhappy the number of places in critical courses has declined and are disappointed MoE and MoHE have not given them a reasonable explanation.

"We are willing to sit and discuss with the MoE how to overcome this situation and we hope that the IPTA intake issue will be settled once and for all," said Wee, who was formerly the deputy education minister between March 2008 and May 2013.

"I am utterly shocked that the press statement had said that I was the deputy ministry for this ministry, as though the IPTA intake was my jurisdiction. The intention of this statement is absurd as the relevant party who issued the statement clearly did not do adequate homework.

"These students' futures are at stake. So don't trivialise the seriousness of this issue." - August 4, 2013.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/wee-continues-war-of-words-with-education-ministry-over-varsity-intake>