

**MCA will not take the lead on Seri Pristana despite call from Indian NGO**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**Sept 4 , 2013**  
**BY RITA JONG AND YISWAREE PALANSAMY**

MCA Youth chief Datuk Wee Ka Siong has declined to take the lead in finding a solution to the SK Seri Pristana controversy, after an Indian non-governmental organisation had said the MIC leaders had failed.

"Traditionally, MIC should look after the Indian community in resolving the issue. I am sure MIC leaders will pay attention and resolve the matter," he said.

Wee said the group could go to the Education Ministry to find a pragmatic solution.

"I believe a consensus can be reached. I don't think it is right for MCA to take over," he told The Malaysian Insider today.

"The Deputy Education Minister P. Kamalanathan and other MIC leaders have to interact with those involved and have a heart-to-heart talk," said Wee, a former deputy Education Minister.

The Malaysian Tamilan Today secretary K. Gunasekaran called for MCA, particularly Wee, to solve the controversy surrounding the school as the latter claimed MIC leaders "lacked courage".

Wee had been vocal in his criticism of the way his former ministry had handled the matter.

Seri Pristana hit the headlines when a concerned parent, Guneswari Kelly, uploaded photographs of non-Muslim children having their recess meals in the school's shower room during the fasting month.

Following that incident, 18 police reports were lodged against the school and its headmaster while the school replied with four reports of its own, claiming that the headmaster and several teachers were threatened.

It was then reported that the headmaster allowed policemen into the school to interview several pupils over the reports. This angered parents who claimed that their children were traumatised after being questioned by police.

Police had earlier denied that they spoke to the pupils but yesterday admitted they did speak to the children after getting the headmaster's approval.

Gunasekaran pointed out that the only MIC leader to visit the school after the canteen in the shower room issue broke, was Kamalanathan, and "he failed miserably".

"He told me and other parents who had waited so long to see him that he had 'no more power' to look into the matter further. I even recorded what he said," said Gunasekaran, adding that he was also upset when Kamalanathan later claimed that this was a "small problem".

"Just because you (Kamalanathan) can't handle (this case), you say (it is a) small issue. If you think you are not capable, you should step down," said Gunasekaran.

He also said P. Waythamoorthy, the deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department, has neither gone to visit the school nor offered any help in this issue.

However, the Selangor Education Department offered some respite to the parents when its director, Mahmud Karim, called for an urgent meeting with the school authorities.

He called for the meeting after he was briefed on several unresolved issues by the Malaysian Tamilan Today, who is representing parents whose children are studying in the school.

"We explained to Mahmud that the parents had not been given the opportunity to explain their side of the story," he said.

He said that Mahmud had also told non-Muslim parents not to transfer their children out of the school.

"He assured us that he will take charge of the matter from today as he wants to know for himself what had really transpired," he said.

Mahmud, during a closed-door meeting with Malaysian Tamilan Today, had agreed to reopen the case and examine the details of the makeshift shower room canteen which had since festered into a series of controversy.

"He claims that he thought the issue had already been settled the day Kamalanathan blew his stop whistle on the matter," Gunasekaran said. - September 5, 2013.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/mcas-wee-urges-seri-pristana-parents-to-engage-mic-over-their-problems>