



Fw: Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities : Meeting on 27 March 2018

From: "Syed M. Agha"

Respected chairman and members, thank you for hearing us today.

I firmly believe, Employability of a person is invariably linked to the person's Education

I will narrate a personal incident and I get to hear similar incidents on a daily basis

I applied for my child's admission in a local Chinese medium kindergarten, on inquiry the teacher asked if our kid spoke Cantonese, which he obviously did not,

So the teacher asked us not to bother applying and look elsewhere where more EM kids go and medium of instruction is English.

We insisted that we want our child to go to a Chinese medium school so he can not only learn Chinese but also grow up and integrate in the society, but it did not yield any positive result. Apparently, the school only accepts born Cantonese speakers.

Even the principal refused to talk to us or meet us regarding the issue, we made calls to EDB, EDB said that they cannot interfere in this matter of discrimination, we called EOC and got a similar answer that discrimination based on language is not covered by EOC,

Currently, our child attends a Kindergarten where minimal Chinese is taught in a segregated classroom.

By not learning Chinese, we are afraid that our kids will be pushed to the boundaries of the society and making them less employable and a not very contributing member of the society. It is absolutely disheartening that there is no initiative from any govt department to address this grave situation.

In another incident, my wife who has a master's degree in English, applied for the job of an English teacher in a kindergarten, she was selected for the job in a written confirmation from the school, but before signing the contract, the principal insisted that she has to remove her headscarf if she wants to teach at the school.

We took the matter to EOC and EOC negotiator offered us 500HKD as the settlement.

Today, the most important message that I want to convey is that societies as a whole pay for discrimination," "They lose economically, politically, and culturally when they exclude a whole group of the population from inclusive development."

With that, I would like to conclude that Beijing's socio-economic vision of "Harmonious Society", cannot be achieved if discrimination in education and employment is not brought to an end, immediately.

Thank You

With Best Regards
Syed M.