



[以地養校] Origin of the term came from the following anecdote : Datuk Seri Panglima Yong Teck Lee, President of Sabah Progressive Party, had during his tenure as the Chief Minister of Sabah for the period 1996-1998 created an unprecedented history by bringing the application of Sabah Chinese High School Tawau (the application was for a parcel of 5

acre State Government land in a commercial area) to the state cabinet and simultaneously moved a motion to approve the said application. Subsequently, the 5 acre commercial land was used by the school to enter into a joint venture development agreement, by way of open tender, with a well-known property developer to build 71 units of commercial shop-lots. Sabah Chinese High School Tawau as the land owner was also eligible for the share of the development by getting 16 commercial shop-lots in return, then sublet to local tenants to earn rental of about RM (Ringgit Malaysia) 400,000 (about USD135,000) each year to help subsidize a great portion of the huge overhead expenses of the school, thus the term “以地養校” was initialized since then, meaning that the school was “raised” by the land in a literal sense.

Malaysia is a multiracial country, the ethnic population of Malay constitutes a vast majority of the country’s population, whereas Chinese constitutes only about 28 percent of total population, government-funded schools are Malay orientated and Malay language is the main medium of instruction, naturally, majority of the students are also Malay. Seeing the difficulty of learning Chinese language in Government funded schools, and in order for their descendants to be able to learn Chinese while at the same time maintain and promote Chinese traditions and cultures in Malaysia, the Chinese immigrants ancestors initiated the call to all local Chinese to contribute generously in the form of money or expertise into the building of Chinese primary schools, subsequently followed by the establishment of Chinese independent secondary schools in Malaysia, The main medium of instruction in this school is Chinese language. The bulk of funding to build and run these schools are contributions and donations solicited from the local Chinese community, the Malaysian government rarely funded local Chinese schools, let alone to approve the grant of government or State land to the Chinese schools. Approval of the five acre commercial land to Sabah Chinese High School Tawau by Sabah State Cabinet is therefore regarded as a miracle and

unprecedented! The success of this event rests upon the great courage demonstrated by the then Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Seri Panglima Yong Teck Lee who was brave enough to break through racial barriers and Government's unofficial practice of never allowing the grant of government land to Chinese schools in Malaysia, and his fearless move of bringing the school's land application into the state cabinet for a motion to open up an unprecedented approval to the land application. Hereafter, the Tawau local Chinese primary and secondary school board of directors, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Clan Associations and other Chinese Societies denoted this great event as "以地養校" to signify the hardship local Chinese had gone through in building and maintaining the operations of Chinese schools, and spontaneously praised Datuk Seri Panglima Yong Teck Lee for his contributions, and to divulge this piece of good news reflecting Chinese struggles in Malaysia to the rest of the world.