

Talk of Ng Chee Meng standing in Jalan Kayu SMC intensifies as he visits Fernvale homes

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National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) Secretary-General Ng Chee Meng has begun visiting homes in Fernvale, raising speculation that he is set to contest in Jalan Kayu SMC, Lianhe Zaobao reported on Monday (March 24).

Fernvale is part of the new Jalan Kayu SMC, carved out from Ang Mo Kio GRC.

Ng and more than 10 volunteers visited two HDB blocks in Jalan Kayu on last Sunday (March 23), according to Zaobao.

A resident also told the Chinese newspaper that they received a doorknob sign informing them that Ng had visited their home but was unable to meet them.

The sign, furnished with pictures of Ng along with links to his socials, reads: "I hope to meet you the next time when I conduct house visits in your area."

Among the Fernvale residents that AsiaOne spoke to on Tuesday (March 25), most were not aware of the boundary changes or Ng's recent presence in the region.

Speaking with AsiaOne, a Fernvale Link resident, who only identified himself as Tan, said that he didn't know about Ng's visit on Sunday.

However, the 40-year-old self-employed man felt that these visits would indicate that Ng is more likely to contest there.

"If he thinks that he can contribute greatly, and he plans to do for this constituency, then why not? That's the most important," Tan added.

Will he contest?

Jackie Wong, a resident of High Park Residences condominium, told AsiaOne that he wasn't aware of Ng's visit to the area.

Wong, an IT officer, did feel that it was likely Ng was trying to contest for the seat, but he wasn't looking forward to it.

"I don't like the People's Action Party (PAP)," the 51-year-old said bluntly, adding that he would vote for the opposition as long as he can.

He hopes that the opposition will be able to address bread-and-butter issues such as cost of living and inflation.

But another resident, Johnson Tong, said that although he didn't know about Ng's house visits because he was overseas, he feels that would be a sign that he might be trying to contest for the seat.

"He contested Sengkang GRC, so I think he should be quite familiar with this area... I think it would be good for him to contest for the Jalan Kayu SMC," the 36-year-old senior account manager said.

He said that the opposition has a fighting chance, saying that there are more younger people in the area.

'Lowest risk' to build on work on incumbent, expert says

When queried about the possibility of Ng contesting Jalan Kayu SMC, senior research fellow at the National University of Singapore Gillian Koh said that "it is more likely than not" that incumbents like the current Ang Mo Kio GRC MP, Gan Thiam Poh, may be fielded.

She explained that the PAP is likely to "field the incumbents that covered the pre-existing ward or where the ward now constitutes the majority of that new SMC".

"Building on the work of the incumbent is the strategy of the lowest risk when it comes to the new SMCs if the plan of the PAP is really to put its best foot forward," Dr Koh said.

She also stated that there may be a process by which the PAP will test out various candidates in different areas, monitoring how people respond and factoring it into the final decision of whom to field and where.

Dr Koh added: "They contest every seat so there is more of a range of choice than other parties."

'You'll find out in good time'

Ng was also seen at earlier events in Fernvale — he joined Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Ang Mo Kio GRC MP Gan at the Fernvale Family Carnival 2025 on March 16.

He had been invited to the event by Gan, who also represents the Fernvale region of the Ang Mo Kio GRC.

According to The Straits Times, Ng responded to queries from the media then on whether he would be contesting: "You'll find out, I'm sure, in good time. You'll see what the Prime Minister decides."

Later that night, Ng took to Facebook to thank Gan for the invitation to the carnival, also sharing about his past experiences with the Seletar, Jalan Kayu and Fernvale areas.

"Seletar Hills had been home to my family and I for 20-odd years," he wrote. "I also 'grew up' here when I flew with the Singapore Youth Flying Club during junior college, and later with the Air Force. The Jalan Kayu roti prata remains a favourite."