

Tiew: Ibrahim Ali did it on purpose
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The white envelope incident was a deliberate act by Malay rights pressure group Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali, said Sri Desa MCA branch chairperson Dr Collin Tiew.

Tiew, who became the subject of ridicule after he was photographed next to Ibrahim during the Jan 29 incident, said Ibrahim is well aware of Chinese customs and taboos.

During a press conference in Jalan Kuchai Lama, Kuala Lumpur today, Tiew said he arrived at this conclusion after reading an article on Ibrahim's presence at a Chinese New Year event in Pasir Mas, Kelantan.

perkasa ibrahim ali chinese new year pasir mas 020212The article, which appeared on Perkasa's website, featured a photograph (right) of Ibrahim donning red in the company of old folks in Kampung Pasir Tendang on January 21. Ibrahim is the Pasir Mas MP.

"The article also wrote that he gave ang pow (red packets) and Mandarin oranges to the people. So there is no way he didn't know these are Chinese customs later on Jan 29," he said.

Wasn't alert enough

Tiew said he felt victimised over the incident because he is perceived as having close ties with Perkasa, although he does not know the organisers.

"There is a local Malay guy who always informs me about open house events. I never ask who the organisers are.

"I have brought people to attend four open house events this year, all of them were fine," he claimed.

NONEHe explained that he was unsure why he was invited on stage to translate Ibrahim's speech but maintained that it was an ad hoc decision on the part of the organisers.

"I was asked to translate Malay leaders' speeches in a previous open house, so I thought it was not wrong to go up again," he said.

After Ibrahim gave the speech, Tiew said organisers asked him to accompany the former in distributing the white envelopes and attend a press conference, to which he obliged.

Tiew admitted that in hindsight, he was not alert enough. He said he had obliged Perkasa's request because he was a guest at the event.

"I did tell Ibrahim that white ang pow is not suitable but he did not bother," he said.

'Perkasa sentenced me to death'

Despite looking very cordial at the Perkasa event, Tiew had harsh words for Ibrahim, claiming that Ibrahim had acted insensitively.

"He is not fit to be a MP. If only he knew Perkasa's image among the Chinese is so bad," he said.

Tiew likened his appearance on stage next to Ibrahim as a "death sentence".

"After (I was dragged into the controversy), he did not even give me a call to apologise," he said.

Tiew said the government should disown any extremist group if the prime minister is serious about the 1Malaysia concept.

"Why do some say BN is in touch with (Perkasa)? The prime minister must resolve this," he said.

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