

Chin Peng 'never regretted his actions'

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By Aidila Razak

As far as Anas Abdullah @ Indrajaya can recall, in the 44 years that he had known former Communist Party of Malaya leader Chin Peng, the latter had never expressed regret for his actions.

NONE "He never felt any regret. What he did was right. Going against colonisers is not wrong," Anas (right) said when met at Chin Peng's wake at a Bangkok temple this drizzly morning.

"He had to continue with the insurgency after the Baling Talks because the Tunku (Abdul Rahman Putra) did not allow us to be free.

"CPM members were to report to police stations, like we were criminals. It was unacceptable."

Eyes glistening, the soft spoken Anas, 56, the son of Regiment 10 leader Abdullah Sudin, said there was no talk of regret even when he last visited the 89-year-old in hospital last week.

"Chin Peng was upbeat and optimistic, and even with a tube attached to his nose, he called out to me. He recognised me and was happy," he said of the man he called 'Uncle'.

Although the conversations were short - "He was tired so we didn't want to wear him out" - on his deathbed, Chin Peng never indicated that he would have taken a different path.

A warm man who liked the harmonica

Remembering his 'Uncle' as a warm, accesible person who loved to play the harmonica, Anas travelled from Kampung Sukhirin, in South Thailand, the moment he received the call that Chin Peng was no more.

"I got the call and immediately. I thought, 'He died at 6.20am on Sept 16. The CPM took up arms on June 20 (1948), and Sept 16 is Malaysia Day.

"We don't believe in in superstitious things but it is something coincidental," said Anas, a Malay and a practising Muslim.

NONEThe son-in-law of CPM fighter Abdullah CD, Anas first met Chin Peng at the age of 12 and worked alongside Chin Peng at radio station Suara Revolusi Malaya in China.

"Sometimes, he would play the harmonica for broadcast.

"He'd come to us and put his arms around us, and invite us for walks together. He was not like what he is made out to be."

In a picture in his mother-in-law Suriani Abdullah's memoir, Anas is a mustachioed 32-year-old, the youngest and only surviving member of CPM's delegation of six in Hatyai.

"I had a mustache before, but no longer. It comes out white now," he said, giggling.

But then his boyish, smiling face clouded over with a sense of sadness: "I'm the only one left now. I'm all alone."

Breach of peace agreement

More than sad, Anas appeared more disappointed, even angry that the Malaysian government had chosen to treat Chin Peng's memory the way it has.

As someone who was party to the initial talks and the final peace agreement, Anas said, Malaysia has now cemented its position as a country that does not uphold international agreements.

He said that by raising such a shield against the return of Chin Peng's remains, Malaysia had breached at least two points of the agreement - to allow all CPM members to return home and not to slander them any more.

Now a Thai citizen Anas said the whole matter has been politicised.

NONEHe applied to return to Malaysia in 1989 but was rejected because he could not prove his citizenship. Anas was born in Indonesia and his parents were born in Singapore.

"Now even the prime minister is calling us terrorists... It has become a tool to instigate the Malays...", he said.

He pointed out that the 1989 peace talks took off because of Abdullah CD's long-standing friendship with then deputy prime minister Abdul Ghafar Baba.

Leaders from both sides then had ties that bound them together, he said. However, these things have now been forgotten.

"How do we say who's punching right or who's punching wrong in a boxing match? The police attacked us and we attacked them, too.

"We even fought with the Thai soldiers, and some were killed, hurt or maimed. But why is it that the the Thais do not treat us in the same manner (as Malaysians)?"

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