

## **S'wak DAP pours scorn on Tiong's appointment**

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Sarawak DAP today poured scorn on the appointment of Tiong King Sing as a special envoy to East Asia by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, accusing his government of losing 'purpose and direction' and of wasteful spending.

"Why did Najib create a special post for Tiong?"

"After all there are ministries which can look after foreign affairs, labour, tourism, trade and immigration.

"And what special skills Tiong has that these ministers cannot offer?" asked Sarawak DAP Chief, Chong Chieng Jen (left), who is also the MP for Bandar Kuching.

Tiong is the Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party's (SPDP) MP for Bintulu.

SPDP had expressed displeasure at not being given any ministerial post even though it won four seats in the May general election.

Chong said that on December 31 last year, Najib announced austerity measures including cutting off 10 percent of the entertainment allowances of ministers, deputy ministers and top civil servants as one of the ways to save government spending.

"But five days later, he announced the appointment of Tiong (right) as a special envoy to East Asia with rank and status equivalent to that of a minister.

"I see this appointment as a political one to appease the demands of SPDP.

"We have ministers to take care of trade, foreign relations, tourism, and labour-exchange programmes between Malaysia and Southeast Asia countries. So why create a special post for Tiong?"

"With this post, the government has to spend a conservative estimate of RM10 million a year for the salaries and allowances of the minister and staff, plus paying for offices, cars, etc.

"So how much Najib has saved on the cut in entertainment allowances and how much additional expenditure has to be incurred on this position of special

ambassador?

"I think Najib must tell the public the budget for this post," Chong said, pointing out that the public funds are being used to appease the SPDP.

"But what about other component parties of BN asking for ministerial positions, will Najib create special ambassador's posts to South Pole, North Pole and Africa?" he asked.

Currently, PRS which has one minister, has rejected the offer of one deputy minister.

Winning six parliamentary seats, PRS has demanded that it be given at least two full-fledged ministers, alternatively, one minister and two deputy ministers.

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