

Perkasa: Affirmative action for all, but 30pc Bumi quota remains
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 — Perkasa declared today it supports needs-based affirmative action but insists that the 30 per cent quota for Malays and Bumiputeras remains in place as they are still lagging behind economically.

“If there is still a wide income disparity between the Bumiputeras and other races in the future, this can affect the country’s security,” Perkasa president Datuk Ibrahim Ali said despite 40 years of pro-Bumiputera affirmative action under the New Economic Policy (NEP).

Ibrahim Ali distributed money in white ang pow packets at Perkasa’s first-ever Chinese New Year open house today.

But the Pasir Mas MP also pledged that the Malay rights NGO will fight to make sure all races are not economically disadvantaged.

The Perkasa president went through great pains to state that his organisation is not racist, and that it generally supports a “needs-based” affirmative action for all Malaysians, especially the poor.

“Perkasa’s struggle is based on the tenets of the Constitution, the country’s social contract. It does not mean we are racist.

“We support affirmative action, to ensure that all races are not left behind economically ... we support any move of the government to eradicate poverty,” he told reporters here.

Perkasa today hosted its first-ever Chinese New Year open house, which kicked off with an impassioned speech by Ibrahim telling invited Chinese guests that his group is not a racist organisation.

He charged that Perkasa had been grossly misunderstood in the past, and declared today’s gathering as proof that the Chinese community understood the group’s goals.

“Perkasa is not racist, but we are an organisation that fights for the unity of all Malaysians. We are defending the Constitution, just as Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tan Cheng Lock, and V. Sambathan did,” Ibrahim told a 350-odd crowd of mostly elderly Chinese.

Ibrahim said that he invited senior citizens from the Tiong Hua community as well as Chinese reporters, and that their presence proved that Perkasa is not racist.

“We want Malaysia to be peaceful and prosperous. Gong Xi Fa Cai! 1 Malaysia!” exclaimed Ibrahim to loud cheers from the crowd.

He later told reporters that he has been secretly meeting Chinese community leaders for the past few months, and that their response has been “encouraging.”

"They know who I am. When I shook hands with the elders of the Tiong Hua community, they say they see me in the papers. They know me," said Ibrahim, who even engaged an interpreter who repeated his speech in Cantonese to the audience.

Ibrahim also said that Perkasa gave out a total of RM10,000 in cash via white ang pow packets to the elderly as well as others who attended today although the Chinese only use white envelopes for funerals.

"Perkasa is cash-strapped. Our celebrations are not grand, so this is what we can do," Ibrahim said.

Many other familiar faces from Perkasa were also present including secretary-general Syed Hassan Syed Ali. Perkasa deputy president Datuk Abdul Rahman Abu Bakar wore a changshan, a traditional Chinese costume.

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