

**Perkasa's "Ang Pow" In White Envelopes Nothing To Do With Government - Najib Bernama
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- The use of white envelopes along with the customary "ang pow" red packets at Perkasa's Chinese New Year gathering last Sunday has nothing to do with the government, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said leader of the NGO, Datuk Ibrahim Ali, is an independent member of parliament. Perkasa is a Malay right-wing group.

"As such, the white packet distributed at the Chinese New Year function should not be construed to be acceptance by the government," Najib said in a posting on his Chinese-language "Ah Jib Gor" Facebook page.

"I think that as long as we can have a better understanding of Chinese culture and promote sensitivity to cultural taboos, such controversial events can be avoided.

"We all know that 'ang pow' means a red envelope, dominated by red rather than other colours," he said, adding that the incident can be used as a social experience.

Yesterday, Perkasa was asked to apologise for insulting the Chinese community by using white envelopes as "ang pow" packets at its first Chinese New Year "open house". White envelopes are reserved for funerals in Chinese custom.

Gerakan vice-president Datuk Mah Siew Keong had said that giving cash in white envelopes during Chinese New Year, which is meant to be a prosperous and joyful festival, showed that Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali is "greatly insensitive and insincere".

MCA Youth secretary-general Chai Kim Sen had said that Perkasa's action was disrespectful to Chinese culture and custom.

He said Ibrahim should act in the people's interests and understand the multi-cultural society and the taboos and prohibitions of each ethnic group and religion.

Perkasa deputy president Datuk Abdul Rahman Bakar had explained that due to the large turnout at the open house at the Sultan Sulaiman Club in Kampung Baru, the red "ang pow" packets ran out and white envelopes were used instead.

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