

Sabah Lions told to hands off Labuan

Sohan Das

LABUAN: Lion dance troupes from Kota Kinabalu have now made the island their fishing grounds and hijacking angpows that rightfully belong to local lions and the Taoist temples here are not viewing it kindly.

Advisor of the Temple of Eight Immortals (Pak Sin Mew) Datuk Wong Kii Yii said this is not the right thing to do as KK has a huge Chinese population and wide area to cover.

“Why do they need to encroach into a small territory and reduce the intake of local troupes?” he asked.

He said at least three troupes came from Kota Kinabalu, while Labuan itself had five temples putting up six performance troupes. The presence of additional lion troupes from outside burdened many

as more angpows had to be given away as “nobody wanted to be rude to shut the door for visiting lions.”

Wong noted that the reason why the lions from outside were attracted to Labuan could be because they felt that Labuan's contributions were usually generous and so they could get a “good bundle of angpows is poor reasoning.”

He explained that times were bad here for local businessmen and angpow were unlike earlier year though some contributed the same amount. He said in the past, going by records, angpow collection during the 15 days of performance hit about RM200,000 as there were many generous donors and many requested for special performances.”

Wong went on to say that though the

performances of lions troupes from Kota Kinabalu were not illegal, he said, these troupes should realise that it was important that the local troupes were able to collect a sizeable amount of angpow as the funds are needed for a temple's activities, maintenance costs and other expenses. He also noted that Labuan did not have as many tycoons like KK.

Wong said that though the overall collection of Labuan lions was not too bad this year, “there were a number of traditional donors due to present circumstances did not entertain lion troupes, which he said was understandable.

Wong is hoping to discuss the issue with Labuan Police Chief Supt Adzar Othman for his advice and a solution to the Labuan problem.



Temples not happy KK lion troupes performing in Labuan.