

**Borneo nationalists mull Putrajaya protest**  
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A group of Borneo nationalists are mulling a protest in Putrajaya on the federal government's continued refusal to revisit the Malaysian Agreement over complaints that Sabah and Sarawak are being short-changed.

"Why not (protest)? We should do anything that will advance our cause for a solution.

"It is a choice between doing something or doing nothing," Bingkor assemblyperson Jeffrey Kitingan (right, standing) said at a forum on The Malaysian Agreement 1963 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Jeffrey was responding to a suggestion raised at the forum organised by the Sarawak Association for People's Aspiration (Sapa) and Borneo Heritage Foundation.

Jeffrey said the forum was deliberately held in Kuala Lumpur to send a signal to the federal government.

"We are trying to send a message to the federal government to open up and respond.

"Don't leave us hanging and boiling down there (in East Malaysia)," he told journalists later.

He added similar forums were also being held overseas to mobilise support.

Sharing his views on building political momentum, Persatuan Hindraf Malaysia (PHM) chairperson P Waythamoorthy said the group should learn from Hindraf's massive protest in 2007 (left).

"I told them if you do this in Kuching or Kota Kinabalu, they (Putrajaya) can't care less.

"But if you do it in Kuala Lumpur, they get worried, so it's time for them to be worried.

"I was told that there are 120,000 Sarawakians and Sabahans in Johor alone, imagine if you can get 20 percent of them to do a roadshow or whatever," Waythamoorthy told an audience of some 80 people.

Waytha: Sue the British government

Waythamoorthy, who served a short stint as a deputy minister in Najib's cabinet, also suggested that Sabah and Sarawak should consider taking the British government to court for the seemingly lopsided Malaysian Agreement.

He said Hindraf is also suing the British government for bringing Indian immigrants to then Malaya without adequate protection for their rights, resulting in today's marginalised Indian community.

Meanwhile, Sapa president Lina Soo argued that the Malaysian Agreement 1963 was invalid as Sabah and Sarawak were not independent states when they formed the Malaysian Federation.

Soo argued that under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, only independent states may enter into treaties.

She added that Putrajaya's failure to comply with the agreement's terms - such as the Borneo-nisation (hiring locals only) for the civil service in Sabah and Sarawak - and Singapore's expulsion without consulting the two other partners, also made it void.

Among the other speakers at the forum were Sabah Progressive Party supreme council member Ken Yong, anthropology professor Awang Hasmadi Mois and Angkatan Perubahan Sabah vice-president Kalakau Untol.

Participants at the forum also passed a resolution on the right of self-determination for Sarawak and Sabah.

'Form reconciliation committee'

The motion reads: "We, the peoples of Sarawak and Sabah in the Convention assembled, do hereby unanimously declare and ordain on this 15th day of June 2014 that it is the peoples' wishes that the nation-states of Sabah and Sarawak shall seek the right to self-determination as enshrined in international law on human rights and civil liberties by people of independent states.

"And to do so would protect our citizens' standard of living and re-secure our inalienable rights and freedoms in accordance with the original ideas and beliefs of our founding fathers which have been compromised by the rule of the Malaysian government."

Jeffrey said if this problem was resolved and power was redistributed to Sabah and Sarawak, it would only serve to strengthen the Federation of Malaysia.

To this end, he called for a "Reconciliation and Reform Committee" comprising East Malaysian stakeholders and the federal government.

Sabah and Sarawak have become more assertive in recent years as BN has become more reliant on the two to retain federal power following declining support in Peninsular Malaysia.

BN has often boasted the two are their 'fixed deposits' owing to the large number of

parliamentary seats in Borneo.

Umno veteran Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah last year called on Putrajaya to review the 20-point Agreement for Sabah and 18-point Agreement for Sarawak, which are safeguards for the states when forming the Federation of Malaysia.

Tengku Razaleigh, who is the MP for Gua Musang, said the agreements were supposed to have been reviewed 10 years after the formation of Malaysia but this never materialised. However, his call fell on deaf ears.

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