

Sabah, Sarawak formed Malaysia as equals, PM told
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State Reform Party (Sabah Star) has reminded Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak that Sabah and Sarawak did not join the Malaya as the 12th and 13th states, but as equals in the federation of Malaysia.

“Sabah and Sarawak never negotiated to join the 12th and 13th states of Malaya or Malaysia.

“If this was the basis and disclosed to Sabah and Sarawak, the founding fathers of Sabah would not have agreed and there would be no Malaysia in existence today,” said STAR Sabah Chief Jeffrey Kitingan when commenting on Najib’s statement at the Miri Malaysia Day celebration.

The premier had compared Sabah and Sarawak ‘joining’ Malaysia as similar to the states of Wisconsin and Hawaii joining the original 13 states of the USA and the newer states other than the founding 13 states in USA celebrate July 4 as their independence day despite joining later.

According to Najib, Sabah and Sarawak should accept August 31, 1957 as the independence day of Malaysia.

Reacting to his statement, Jeffrey said: “The truth behind the takeover of Sabah and Sarawak appears to be revealed, intentionally or unintentionally by the comparison of Sabah and Sarawak ‘joining’ Malaysia similarly to Wisconsin and Hawaii joining the original 13 states of USA.

“We never negotiated to join as the 12th and 13th states of Malaya or Malaysia,” he said, pointing out that right from the outset, Malaysia was to be a new nation, a partnership and succinctly stated by Lord Cobbold, chairperson of the Cobbold Commission.

M'sia - association of partners

Cobbold had said that ‘it is a necessary condition that from the outset, Malaysia should be regarded by all concerned, as an association of partners, combining in common to create a new nation but retaining their own individualities’.

According to Jeffrey, Tuan Fuad Stephen, one of the founding fathers of Malaysia had expressed fear when he said: ‘if we had been asked to join at the time Malaya achieved independence and Britain made it possible for us, the story would have been a different one.

'Now that 'Merdeka' has been Malaya's for some years, and we are still struggling towards it, Malaya's proposal that we join the 12th and 13th states savours of imperialism, of a drive to turn us into Malayan colonies. To join Malaya, while we are still colonies... the implication is to hand (ourselves) over to your control'.

Jeffrey said that Sarawak Chief Minister Adenan Satem aptly put it that there was no Malaysia to join as it was not in existence then.

He said Najib should consult Malaysia's top judge, chief Justice Tun Arifin Zakaria who said in Kota Kinabalu several months ago when launching the book 'The Constitutional rights of Sabah and Sarawak' that the two states formed Malaysia and that they are key partners in the federation of Malaysia.

"From the Sabah perspective, it is clearly spelt out in the Constitution of Sabah by Article 66(1) that the 'federation' means the federation to be known, on and after Malaysia Day, by the name Malaysia.

"It does not recognise and is not part of the federation of Malaya that existed between August 31, 1957 and September 15, 1963.

"The rumblings of discontentment and unhappiness among the people in Sabah and Sarawak are moving towards its tipping point with a slight majority wanting Sabah and Sarawak to opt out of Malaysia," he said, adding that the prime minister needs to convene his advisers and historians to review Malaysia's history.

"This is also to rectify the mistakes of past leaders including his late father.

"He needs to stop hoodwinking the people and distorting the facts of history and take the necessary steps to restore Sabah and Sarawak as equal partners in the federation of Malaysia as promised by the first prime minister of Malaysia Tunku Abdul Rahman.

"It is the only way of saving Malaysia from tottering towards break-up," he said.