

'With MyKad, Umno signs up Indians, Pakistanis'

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A Sabah opposition leader has claimed that Indonesians, Pakistanis and Indian nationals are being issued with MyKad and recruited as Umno members.

Describing this as a new threat to the state, State Reform Party chief Jeffrey Kitingan said reliable sources have revealed that while there is a drop in the issuance of MyKads to Filipinos, there is an alleged increase with regard to other foreigners.

"Even Bugis (Indonesian) and Indian NGOs are reportedly involved in assisting the newcomers to obtain MyKads and recruiting them as Umno members and voters for hire," he added.

If the track record of the "Filipino Project IC holders" is to be used as a yardstick, Jeffrey said the Indonesians, Pakistanis and Indian nationals are a "time bomb".

"It is only a matter of time before these 'new' Malaysians recruited for political purposes explode with their own brand of problems, including the risk of imported Islamic State (IS) militancy.

"If the defence minister is to be believed, there is also the threat of IS militancy from these foreigners," he warned in a statement.

He said these threats were not just cross-border kidnappings for ransom, which have been made worse by the authorities paying huge sums for the release of the victims.

Jeffrey called for concerted efforts and additional measures to safeguard Sabah's security in the long-term.

'Issue special MyKad for Sabahans'

Some of these measures should include the issuance of special MyKad for Sabahans, separate identity cards for non-residents and the setting up of Sabah's own Homeland Security network.

Not to be excluded, Jeffrey said, should be national and regional efforts to involve all groups, not just regional factions like the Bangsa Moro Peace Framework and to develop the local economies of neighbouring countries bordering Sabah.

"With development and improving economies and security, their nationals will stay in their home countries, rather than venture across the Sulu and Sulawesi seas to find work in Sabah.

"These measures will make Sabah safer and eventually there will be no necessity for the Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom)," added the Bingkor assemblyperson.

On the budget allocation for Esscom, Jeffrey advised Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to stop pulling wool over the eyes of Sabahans on the security of their state by arguing that Esscom is the long-term solution for security.

"Esscom is not a long-term solution to Sabah's security and the RM660 million allocation in the 2015 Budget does not seriously reduce the security threats against Sabah.

"The building of two camps and additional 1,280 personnel are perhaps the only addition to Esscom's capability. The emoluments and operating costs of the 1,280 personnel would probably only cost less than RM50 million," he said.

"Minus these additional costs and the cost of the two camps, the bulk of the RM660 million would actually be emoluments and operating costs for the existing security personnel.

"This is essentially paper shuffling of costs from their original bases to their Esscom bases in Sabah. It is nothing new in this portion of the budget allocation for Esscom," he added.

Just putting up camps and additional security personnel, Jeffrey said, are mere policing and not preventive action to reduce security threats.

Similarly, he added, imposing night-to-dawn curfews is a policing measure, which may be advantageous to the authorities, but a hindrance to the fishing and tourism industries.

"Esscom or the overall security strategy for Sabah must incorporate and cover comprehensive and wide measures to protect Sabah. High on the priority list must be a genuine solution to the illegal immigrants and the monster created by Project IC.

"This monster has already spread to the peninsula, as can be seen from the arrests of security guards, taxi drivers and others there for carrying fake Sabah MyKad," he added.