

Commission: Project IC 'probably' existed
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The royal commission of inquiry (RCI) report on illegal immigrants in Sabah has concluded that the controversial "Project IC" probably existed in the state.

The project was allegedly used by civil servants to issue identification cards to illegal immigrants, causing a population influx in the state.

The RCI concluded that there is "some credibility" in testimonies by five people who admitted being part of the alleged project during the RCI hearings.

"However, none of the witnesses were subjected to cross examination, as would have been the case in a trial," the report, released today, stated.

"That being the case and given the denials against the allegations, we can only conclude that it was more likely than not, that Project IC did exist as reflected in the evidence of the five witnesses," it added.

The RCI report said that such a project probably "existed at all material times."

Without being conclusive, the report questioned why all the five witnesses allegedly involved in the project made "serious" allegations against political figures.

"This must necessarily raise the question as to why they would have the audacity to do so. What was their motive?" the report asked.

The report also noted that the interrogation conducted on some of the witnesses did not probe anything beyond the financial motives of those involved in the operation.

"They did not seem to find it necessary to go beyond the financial motive and to determine whether there were other motives involved," it said.

The five witnesses were former National Registration Department (NRD) officers who were involved in "Project IC", Haji Ramli Kamaruddin, Asli Sidup, Rauf Sani, Kee Dzulkifli Kee Abdul Jalil, and Yakop Damsah.

"From the evidence of these witnesses, it is clear there was a clandestine exercise involving senior officers in the NRD, Sabah, who apparently acted under orders from their political superiors.

"This clandestine exercise involved illegal activities relating to the processing and issuance of Malaysian identification documents to illegal immigrants in pursuit of a political

agenda," said the report.

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