



**How many M'sians are there in Singapore?
Malysiakini.com
October 16, 2010**

The 10th Malaysia Plan revealed in June announced a Talent Corporation to headhunt Malaysians abroad with the skills to drive economic growth based on innovation and entrepreneurship.

Prime Minister Najib Razak (*below*) said last week that the body will start work in January.

So far, however, Malaysia has had little success in getting its best people home. Two programmes in the last 15 years have drawn fewer than 1,000 respondents, according to *The Straits Times* Singapore on Oct 14. Since Singapore is probably the country with the most Malaysians, it is perhaps a good starting point.

The Singapore Census of Population 2010 Advance Census Release revealed some surprising statistics about Malaysians in Singapore.

It says about 1 in 4 (23 percent) of the resident population - Singaporeans and permanent residents (PRs) - were not born in Singapore. Of that 23 percent, about half (45 percent) were from Malaysia.

The above statistics surprised everyone in Singapore, since it has been raised in various blogs and the media that the recent rise in the local population was due mainly to immigrants from China.

The population of Singapore-born residents dropped from 81.9 to 77.2 percent from 2000 to 2010, ie from 3.3 to 3.8 million.

The non-Singapore-born population rose from 18.1 (592,000) to 22.8 (859,000) percent.

What the census does not say is how many of the 386,000 Malaysian-born residents are Singapore citizens and how many are PRs.

Malaysians everywhere

Out of the total population of 5.08 million, Singapore has 3.77 million residents, of which 3.23 million were Singapore citizens and 0.54 million were PRs. This means that about 4 in 10 are not Singaporeans.

The number of Singapore PRs grew by 1.5 percent in 2010, a decrease from the minimum 6 percent annual growth noted between 2005 and 2009. Growth in the number of non-residents also slowed to 4.1 percent in 2010, down from the peaks of 15 percent in 2007 and 19 percent in 2008, and the number of Singapore citizens increased by only 0.9 percent.

In this regard, what are the corresponding statistics for Malaysia?





According to Wikipedia, Malaysia has 10 to 20 percent foreign workers, the exact figure being uncertain due in part to the large number of illegal workers. There are a million legal foreign workers and perhaps another million unauthorised foreigners.

Sabah alone had nearly 25 percent of its 2.7 million population listed as illegal foreign workers in the last census. Sabah NGOs estimate that out of the 3 million population, 2 million are illegal immigrants.

As Singapore does not allow dual citizenship, Malaysians who take up Singapore citizenship will have to give up their Malaysian citizenship.

In this connection, how many of the 40,000 new citizens and 140,000 PRs in the last two years were Malaysians?

The majority of the increase in PRs comprise immigrants from Malaysia and the Indian subcontinent. The ethnic Chinese PRs in Singapore predominantly hail from Malaysia.

Over the 10-year period, the number of Malaysia-born Chinese in Singapore (PRs and Singapore citizens combined) went up by 81,000, while that of China-born Chinese rose by just 13,000.

Over half million working in S'pore

I understand that when Singapore left Malaysia in 1965, Singaporeans were given the option to choose to become Malaysian citizens. My uncle was one of them. How many Singaporeans made this choice in 1965?

How many of the 1.3 million non-residents in Singapore now are Malaysians, on work permits, employment pass, S-pass, student pass, long-term visit pass, entrepreneur pass, certificate to seek employment, etc?

Since none of the above statistics are publicly available, I estimate the total number of Malaysian-born in Singapore to be about 600,000, since Malaysia's Human Resource Ministry says that there are about 350,000 Malaysians working in Singapore, and that 386,000 PRs (excluding Malaysian-born Singapore citizens and non-resident Malaysians) were Malaysians.



In addition to the above, what about Malaysian tourists who come to Singapore everyday?

Bus loads of Malaysians have been arriving at Singapore's two new integrated resorts (IR), Resorts World Sentosa and Marina Bay Sands (*below*), almost hourly since they opened this year. Malaysia's Express Bus Agencies Association has said that on weekends, at least 50 tour buses roll into Resorts World Sentosa alone. There are at least 30 coach-based travel agencies that run IR tours from Johor.

For example, the purchase of S\$100 (RM238) worth of casino chips comes with a free bus ride and freebies like a food voucher, or a discounted RM30 ticket for the two-way bus ride, in addition to loyalty and promotional membership programmes.

Tour packages from Johor to Genting Highlands have reportedly dropped by about 50 percent since Singapore's two IRs opened. Michael Tay, deputy chairman of the MCA's public complaints bureau in Johor Bahru has said that the number of gambling problem cases he handles have jumped from about four or five a month to 16 in the last two months, with about half related to the IRs in Singapore.

Chinese and Malay population slides

In 2005 (latest data available), only 5.4 percent of Malays, were admitted to Singapore's publicly funded universities, compared to 30 and 11 percent for Chinese and Indians respectively. The figures for 1980 was 0.5, 5.9 and 3.5 percent respectively.

Another interesting statistic is that the population of Chinese and Malays in Singapore declined, while that of Indians and others increased. Chinese declined from 76.8 to 74.1, Malays from 13.9 to 13.4, Indians rose from 7.9 to 9.2, and Others from 1.4 to 3.3 percent.

Considering this, it would be interesting to know the breakdown of Malaysians in Singapore along the four ethnic groups.

I wonder if the Malaysian Government have the statistics of Malaysians in Singapore and if so, is it public information?

For example, perhaps one of the most "talked about" topics in my casual conversations with Malaysian friends is how many Malaysians have become Singaporeans, and vice versa.

Perhaps all Malaysians who have given up their citizenship could be encouraged to return by offering them Malaysian citizenship again or allowing dual citizenship.

Some notable countries that allow dual citizenship are the United States, France, Canada, Italy, New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden, United Kingdom.

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