

Perlis Mufti slams NRD for annulling daughter's citizenship
The Malaysian Insider
December 23, 2011
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 23 — Perlis Mufti Dr Juanda Jaya today lashed out at the civil service and Putrajaya after the National Registration Department (NRD) told him his daughter was not a Malaysian citizen.

The incident occurred earlier today when Juanda, who is Melanau, tried to apply for his 12-year-old daughter's identity card at the NRD office in Kuching.

"My child is stateless! What kind of system is this? Are we in Africa or chaotic Zimbabwe?" he said in a statement.

"At a time when many foreigners are said to have been given citizenship, my daughter who is a Melanau, a Sarawak Bumiputera whose right to citizenship is clearly preserved in the Constitution, is suddenly said not to be a Malaysian national."

Juanda said that while his wife was an Indonesian citizen, there was no reason his young daughter should be victimised for this, especially since the NRD's own records identified the child as a Melanau.

He pointed out his daughter had visited relatives in Jakarta earlier this month on her Malaysian passport, and questioned how she could possibly be tagged in the NRD system as a non-citizen in light of this.

"How would you feel if, as a Bumiputera whose people are clearly mentioned in the Constitution as being indigenous... to this country and whose constitutional rights are guaranteed, you are suddenly denied these rights by your beloved country's system?"

"The minimum right is for citizenship. Not the right to get a logging licence or windfall projects. And yet that right is denied by the existing system," he said.

Juanda, who studied at the prestigious Al-Azhar University in Cairo, also likened his interaction with NRD Kuching to his dealings with Egyptian officials under Hosni Mubarak during his yearly visa applications then, and questioned the government's claim that the civil service was now more efficient.

He said he was told by an NRD officer there to present a marriage certificate, despite the fact no such requirement was stated on any notice board there, nor was he asked for one when he previously applied for his other children's identity cards.

"Why is this? The home minister can grant citizenship to foreign nationals but the child of a Malaysian man is denied her citizenship?"

"What has happened to our country's system? Who will help my daughter get her citizenship?" he said.

The Malaysian Insider

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