

Sabah BN leaders praise Najib for tackling issue
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KOTA KINABALU: Sabah Barisan Nasional leaders gave their approval to the terms of reference (ToR) and the commissioners appointed for the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) on the state's illegal immigrants problem announced on Saturday.

"The BN leadership is not merely performing lip service. Najib walks the talk and fulfils what he says he will do," said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman.

Parti Bersatu Sabah president Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan said BN leaders would do their part in supporting and contributing towards the success of the inquiry.

When asked how this would minimise the impact of Datuk Seri Wilfred Bumburing and Datuk Seri Lajim Ukin leaving the coalition, Pairin said since one of the issues they had highlighted was the RCI itself, those supporting them could return and rally behind the government.

United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation president Tan Sri Bernard Dompok praised Najib for being the first prime minister to rise to the challenge of finding a solution to the issue.

"It's better late than never. We've been going on with this for decades now and I've worked for three prime ministers. This prime minister is the only one who has had the guts to tackle this issue."

On former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent statement about the entitlement of long-staying illegal immigrants to citizenship, Dompok said Dr Mahathir was taking a jibe at the government of the time but nobody in Sabah would agree with him.

"We are talking about the value of citizenship and he's talking about giving it to illegal immigrants.

"Never in any country do you give citizenship to illegal immigrants.

"It is time now for the people of Sabah to support (Najib) because he is the guy who wants this settled once and for all," said Dompok.

Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah president Tan Sri Joseph Kurup said the comments were Dr Mahathir's personal opinion and not strong enough to determine whether a person was indeed a citizen or "someone in possession of illegal documents". "I believe the authorities are capable of determining a person's citizenship."

Liberal Democratic Party president Datuk Liew Vui Keong said what was needed now was for all quarters called by the RCI to assist in investigations.

Meanwhile, Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili, who chaired the Parliamentary Select Committee on Electoral Reform, said the RCI formation fulfilled the recommendation of the committee as the presence of illegal immigrants in Sabah had been linked with alleged tainting of the electoral roll. He hoped the RCI would solve the illegal immigrant problem once and for all.

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