

**Lahad Datu Militant Intrusion Not Related To RCI - Sabah Police Commissioner
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KOTA KINABALU, May 23 (Bernama) -- The intrusion incident in Lahad Datu by militants from the southern Philippines in February this year was not related to the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) on illegal immigrants in Sabah, the commission was told Thursday.

Commissioner of Police (CP) for Sabah Datuk Hamza Taib said the police had talked to the intruders and obtained their feedback that it was not about the RCI.

"We (police) have established why they landed in Lahad Datu. The RCI was not a reason for the intrusion," he said when replying to RCI panel member, Universiti Malaysia Sabah former vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Seri Dr Kamaruzaman Ampon.

Hamza said the intrusion was an example of how the flood of illegal immigrants in Sabah could threaten the security of the state, because those involved had the support of their countrymen who had families or friends living in Sabah.

Responding to RCI panel member, Kuala Lumpur former police chief of Kuala Lumpur Datuk Henry Chin Poy Wu, he said the security threat not only came from foreigners but also local residents.

"The intruders could enter the country because they had the support of local residents but those involved were not many," he said, responding to another panel member, former Sabah deputy chief minister and ex-Sabah Attorney General Tan Sri Herman J. Luping.

Hamza, who was appointed as Sabah CP in 2010, denied that the intruders were able to enter the state because they possessed identity cards.

"I was involved in the Lahad Datu intrusion offensive since the early stage. I am 100 per cent confident that the intruders were Suluk who were illegals; they did not have any identity cards," he said, adding that the culprits were detained under the Security Offences Act (Special Measures Act) 2012 and had also been charged in court.

To a question from counsel Datuk John Sikayun who is holding a watching brief for the Sabah Law Association, Hamza said he could not say whether the intrusion would happen again.

However, he said the establishment of the ESSCOM to safeguard the security and wellbeing of the people in Sabah would potentially prevent illegal entry by foreigners.

To a question by conducting officer Manoj Kurup, Hamza said the Crime Index involving foreigners in Sabah was less than 30 per cent from 2000 until 2011 and that the remaining per centage involved local residents.

Hamza disagreed with Manoj's suggestion that the percentage of crimes committed by foreigners and the local people were at 50-50.

"For example from January until December 2000, of the 1,258 arrests, only 151 involved Filipinos, 153 involved Indonesians and the remaining 934, local people," he said.

Asked by RCI chairman, former Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak Tan Sri Steve Shim Lip Kiong on whether the police had sufficient logistics and manpower to combat crimes committed by illegal immigrants, Hamzah said they were presently adequate.

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