

**Government agencies failed to act on reports, Sabah Minister tells RCI**  
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**BY LEE SHI-IAN**

Various government agencies, including the police and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency (MACC), failed to take action on reports lodged about indiscriminate issuance of identity cards to illegal immigrants, the Royal Commission of Inquiry on illegal immigrants in Sabah heard today.

A visibly agitated and emotional Sabah Rural Development Minister Datuk Radin Malleh said previous efforts to correct the problem had been in vain as the Election Commission, the then Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency, National Registration Department and the police did nothing.

"I have lodged reports and sent memorandums to all these government agencies on this issue since the 1990s. I have raised the issue that these immigrants were also registered on the electoral rolls but I haven't received any feedback at all," he said.

"Personally, I have known about the issuance of identity cards to illegal immigrants, which was not in accordance with the law, since Malaysia achieved independence. Between the 1960s and 1980s, the issuance of identity cards was done in a haphazard manner.

"However, the process was streamlined and became more organised after the 1980s with thousands of illegal immigrants being given identity cards.

"I was aware of the incident even during my time serving in the police force," said Radin, who resigned from the force in the 1990s with the rank of deputy superintendent.

Radin joined Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) shortly after resigning from the police force and was appointed as the party secretary-general. During his tenure, he was approached by many individuals who gave him documents pertaining to the indiscriminate issuance of identity cards to illegal immigrants.

"Every time I received such documents and information, I lodged police reports," Radin said, adding that he had lodged between five and seven police reports on the issue but had never received feedback from the police.

"I have also cross-checked the names and identity card numbers which I received from anonymous sources and it was registered on the electoral roll. In Feb 1999, I received a list containing 49,270 names and identity card numbers, supposedly illegal immigrants who had been given the identification documents."

Radin said he lodged a police report over the matter and handed the list of names to the authorities. He said he also received a list containing the names of NRD officers who had issued the identity cards to illegal immigrants without following proper procedure.

"I noticed that most of the NRD officers whose names were on the list were later arrested under the Internal Security Act. I also heard of Ops Gembeling, where certain districts had been identified by NRD for illegal immigrants to be issued Malaysian documents."

In April 2007, the PBS leadership paid a courtesy call on then Prime Minister Tun Abdullah

Ahmad Badawi in Putrajaya and handed him a memorandum.

PBS, led by Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan, called on the government to stop the issuance of identity cards to illegal immigrants and to revoke those already issued.

"Genuine Sabahans are worried about the influx of illegal immigrants into the state and are worried about being outnumbered in their birth land. In 1996, we submitted a request to the government for a Royal Commission of Inquiry to be formed but it was ignored."

Later on, Radin said a study was done by the PBS headquarters on a list of 80,620 identity cards of dubious origin and it was discovered that the holders were all registered voters.

The study revealed that at least 10 per cent of Sabah's registered voters held dubious identity cards.

PBS had been given a bundle of documents and files by an anonymous source who claimed that it contained information on illegal immigrants being issued identity cards on a mass basis. Radin said copies of the documents were made and passed to the MACC, police, NRD and EC but no action was taken.

"There are also a lot of problems related to the huge number of foreigners currently in Sabah including education, health, housing and social issues. The quota for Bumiputras in Sabah has also been taken over by the foreigners."

"When these illegal immigrants who hold Malaysian identity cards apply for privileges meant for Bumiputras, such as bus and taxi permits or hawker licences, they are directly depriving genuine Bumiputras of their entitlement."

Asked what should be done to resolve the issue of illegal immigrants holding Malaysian identity cards, Radin's voice choked with emotion as he said the immigrants had not gotten their documents in the proper manner, hence it should be revoked immediately.

"They may hold Malaysian identity cards, but they are still foreigners so I recommend revoking their documents and deporting them back to where they came from. These immigrants are not Malaysian citizens," Radin told the five-man panel led by former Sabah and Sarawak Chief Justice Tan Sri Steve Shim Lip Kiong. - July 25, 2013.

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