

Many willing to give up Dual Citizenship Status for Malaysian Citizenship

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- The government's move in providing various benefits and amenities has driven many dual citizenship holders, especially those holding Thai and Malaysian citizenship, to give up their dual citizenship status for Malaysian citizenship.

This was acknowledged by a Pengkalan Hulu resident who only wants to be known as Ahmad, 24, when met by Bernama in Ipoh recently.

Ahmad said he renounced his Thai citizenship when he was 18 after having held dual citizenship as his mother is a Thai national and father, a Malaysian.

"After I was born in Malaysia, my mother took me to Betong and ensured that I obtained Thai citizenship, but at the same time I visited Malaysia regularly.

"I studied in Malaysia until I completed my Form Five education and had no problems attending school in Malaysia because I had a valid birth certificate," he said.

Ahmad, who has seven siblings from two mothers, said he renounced his Thai citizenship after his mother asked him to make a choice.

He admitted that it was an advantage to hold dual citizenship though it was unlawful in Malaysia and Thailand, adding that Malaysia had so much to offer.

However, Ahmad added that it was not easy to obtain Malaysian citizenship for two of his younger siblings who were born in Betong and were schooling in Pengkalan Hulu.

He said the two had to apply for student visas which had to be renewed every year.

"They have been studying in Malaysia for the past one year," he said.

Meanwhile, a food stall operator in Pengkalan Hulu who only wants to be known as Kak Lia, 68, said she renounced her Thai citizenship in 1999 as she felt there was more to gain as a Malaysian citizen.

However, Kak Lia was a bit disappointed because unlike other relatives and friends who obtained the Malaysian identity card, she was only granted Permanent Resident status or better known as 'Red IC' among holders.

She was sad that under the 'Country of Origin' at the back of the card, it was written 'Stateless'.

"I have been going to the National Registration Department since 1999 to replace my Red IC, but to no avail.

"I am still thankful though because even with the Red IC, I still manage to use the banking facilities and seek hospital treatment. Unfortunately, I cannot vote," said Kak Lia.

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