

# The Risk of Separation of Sarawak and Sabah from Malaysia: Joining Indonesia?

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KALIMANTAN - Racism in Malaysia is strongly suspected to continue to occur prominently among the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in the government. The problem is that important officials in government agencies are dominated by ethnic Malays, as complained by community leaders and politicians from the states of Sarawak and Sabah on the island of Borneo (Kalimantan).

Very few high-ranking officials from the natives of Sarawak and Sabah since these two regions from Kalimantan, joined Singapore to the Malaysian Federation on September 16, 1963.

The following is a report by Patrick Sorongan from Suara Pemred, (West Kalimantan), a province directly adjacent to Sarawak, which is also summarized from various sources.

The issue of injustice has also affected the distribution of money from the oil proceeds of Petroliam Nasional Berhad (Petronas), an oil and gas company with the status of a State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN), although the memorandum for benefits for oil and gas mainly originates in Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia on the island of Kalimantan.

The joining of Sarawak and Sabah to Malaysia on September 16, 1963 was based on the recommendation of the British Government.

As rulers of the British Commonwealth of Nations, it was agreed that Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak would join the Malay Land Alliance, so that the Federation of Malaysia could be formed.

After joining Malaysia, the main political party of the State of Singapore, namely

the People's Action Party (PAP) led by Lee Kuan Yew, managed to win the state.

The PAP's victory was due to the frequent voicing of privileges regarding the indigenous people, triggering many United Malays National Organizations to urge the government to arrest Lee Kuan Yew.

When Singapore was Expelled by Malaysia On August 7, 1965, the proclaimer of Malaysia and the first Chief Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, expelled Singapore from Malaysia. However, many Malaysians regard Tunku Abdul Rahman's actions as a loss. This is because according to them, there are actually many other ways to keep Singapore safe.

It was at that time that the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation took place. Three Indonesian marines - Harun Thohir, Usman Janatin, and Gani bin Arup - successfully blew up the MacDonald House in Singapore in 1965.

The three then fled, but two of them, Harun and Usman, were arrested, then hanged three years later, despite Indonesia's apology. Moreover, in 1968, President Soekarno had been replaced by Suharto, who at that time was supported by the West.

The Republic of Singapore itself was declared in 1965, then emerged as one of the world's trading centers. Many facilities and progress during the reign of Prime Minister (PM) Lee Kuan Yew.

However, in 1990, Lee Kuan Yew stepped down from politics and was replaced by the government of Goh Chok Tong. In 2004 also, Goh Chok Tong resigned as PM, and gave way to Lee Kuan Yew's son, Lee Hsien Loong to rule.

As for the lack of Bumiputera from Sarawak and Sabah in holding senior positions in the Malaysian government, it has resurfaced.

The Minus of Sarawak and Sabah Civil Servants Holding High Positions in Malaysia The Malaysian newspaper, Free Malaysia Today, reported on Saturday, 23 July 2022, that this matter was questioned by a member of parliament, Tenom Noorita Sual.

According to Noorita, racial divisions among civil servants, as recently reported, show that the situation is 'definitely unfair, and is a cause of great concern.

"As a representative for the natives of Sabah, I am deeply saddened to learn that so few sons of Sabah, as well as Sarawak, hold the highest positions as government officials," he said.

"This clearly gives the impression that there is a flaw in the appointments for these positions in our civil service," Deputy Chair of the Sabah DAP Party said in a statement.

Separate from Malaysia, Join Indonesia? The problem now arises because of complaints from a number of community leaders in Sarawak and Sabah because their regions are the poorest countries compared to their 'colleagues' in Malaysia.

That is why, not a few citizens of Sarawak and Sabah want the two states to join

the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

If this statement is true and represents the aspirations of the Malaysian people in the region in Kalimantan, then it might happen.

This is because of the closeness between Malaysians and Indonesians in Kalimantan. Moreover, it is supported by smooth land transportation between Pontianak, the provincial capital of West Kalimantan, Sarawak and Sabah in addition to Brunei Darusallam.

In addition, the National Capital City (IKN) Nusantara, which is being built in stages in East Kalimantan, will also be a special charm for Kalimantan residents in the Malaysian region regarding the desire to join.

Moreover, the Dayak ethnicity as a native of Kalimantan, has a very close emotional relationship with their brothers and sisters in Kalimantan, the territory of Indonesia.

On that basis, the Malaysian Government should enforce justice for the citizens of Sarawak and Sabah. Because, if racism does exist, and there are still injustices in the distribution of oil and gas royalties to these Malaysian states, then don't be surprised if someday the citizens of Sarawak and Sabah will fly the red and white flag in front of their homes.\*\*\*