Opinion on SSKM and Sabah Country Myth

Iqbal U

History Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

Corresponding author: Iqbal U, History Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia, UKM 43650, Bangi Selangor, Malaysia; Tel: 60389215555; E-mail: uqibah@siswa.ukm.edu.my

Received date: May 19, 2016; Accepted date: May 20, 2016; Published date: May 24, 2016

Copyright: © 2016 Iqbal U. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Opinion

Sabah Sarawak Keluar Malaysia (SSKM) is a separatist organisation who intends to separate the states of Sabah and Sarawak from the Federation of Malaysia. It was established on 9 August 2011 by its founder, namely Doris Jones, a Sabahan residing in the United Kingdom. In 2013, SSKM was officially registered under a new non-governmental organization based in the United Kingdom under the name Sabah Sarawak Union-UK (SSUK). I feel compelled to write about this organization because of its dangerous ideology that deifying the country status of Sabah and Sarawak on the harmony and unity that exists between the people in Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak and Sabah since the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.

I'm focusing on Sabah as the struggle of SSKM are more powerful based here than in Sarawak. In fact, as a Malaysian history scholar, I was amazed and amused about the origin of the idea that Sabah is a country because it is already evident that Sabah or North Borneo, its former name before the formation of Malaysia has never been an independent state since it was under the reins of the Sultanate of Brunei, Sultanate of Sulu, British North Borneo Chartered Company, the Japanese and the British government until it gained its independence through the formation of Malaysia.


I am sure there are many more studies that will highlight the same findings, simply because of lack of time caused me to not be able to list more research. It certainly requires a high level of genius when Doris Jones often shouted to her followers that the North Borneo used to be a country and as a follower, they have a sense of extreme fanaticism to believe. This is because journal articles and books using various primary and secondary sources as a reference, including archive files that are either in the United Kingdom or Malaysia. Do SSKM shows that they are more powerful than K. G. Tregonning that is recognized globally as an expert in the history of Sabah? Unfortunately until now SSKM still failed to prove which reference sources they are using to prove that North Borneo was a country before the formation of Malaysia.

Is North Borneo become independent on 31 August 1963? Actually, that date is the day North Borneo was granted self-governing to give locals an administer experiences before consolidated with the Federation of Malaya. The last British Governor of North Borneo, William Allmond Codrington Goode still holds full power up to 16 September 1963. The case is the same with Sarawak and Singapore. According to Prof. Michael Leigh, who is known for his study of Sarawak politics, "Sarawak was self-governed in 31 August 1963, not independent. Singapore was self-government from 1959 to 1963, and it became independent between 31 August and 16 September; then (independent) again in August 1965."

How North Borneo is a country when the Union Jack flag was lowered only on 15 September 1963 the same as the Union Jack flag was lowered in the Federation of Malaya on 30 August 1957 before gaining independence from the British? If North Borneo is a country, why does the Union Jack flag still flutters in Jesselton for 15 days? If North Borneo is a country, why British authorities determine its integration into the Federation of Malaysia while SSKM claimed poll conducted by the Cobbold Commission was not representative of the majority of the North Borneo people? Where is the sovereignty of North Borneo as a country?

I saw two factors leading supporter of SSKM assumed that North Borneo is a country because of its involvement in the Olympic Games 1956 in Melbourne and the use of the name 'Yang Dipertua Negara Sabah' when the declaration of the formation of Malaysia. R.M. Jasni, Chacho Haji Bulah & Jasni Matlani which are the three leading Sabah writers in the book 'Sejarah Parti Berjaya' said the leader of North Borneo when given the right of self-governing thought that the post of
Yang Dipertua Negara Sabah is the same with the British Governor since they still lack experience in administering. About North Borneo’s involvement in the Olympic Games, it is the capacity of it as a British protectorate and has a National Olympic Committee that was subject to the laws of the International Olympic Committee. On the launch of the book ‘Sabah Sebuah Negara’ by Daniel Jemon Janaun, I see the term ‘state’ or ‘nation’ is used to refer to ‘a large aggregate of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory’. The same concept of Malay ‘nation’ Malays who make up the population in region of the Malay world was discussed by Rahim Aman in the book ‘Minda Pelaut dan Kenangan Tanah Leluhur: Kemelayuan Malaysia-Indonesia’.

Although I saw the misunderstanding among the people of Sabah that causing support to SSKM, these things can be corrected if Sabahan leaders who fight for the people are there to publicize the real history of Sabah to the people and not treat them like the enemy because it is just a mind war and requires a lot of facts strength on the opponents of the existence of SSKM. If the respondent fails to do so, the myth of Sabah country will be run in accordance with the time and is inherited by the next generation of the current generation, and the next generation will bequeath to the next generation, just like the myth of Shangri-La, which has been running for so long.