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KOTA KINABALU: The difference in perspectives between Malaysians in the peninsula and those in Sabah and Sarawak over the country's formation is making them think that there are 2Malaysias, says a human rights commissioner.

Former state secretary Tan Sri Simon Sipaun said Sabahans and Sarawakians in general regarded Sept 16, 1963 as the day the nation was formed. The date was when the two states teamed up with Malaya.

“However, in a recent discussion involving academics, lecturers and students in the peninsula, it was obvious that there was a different view of Sabah and Sarawak's position,” said Sipaun, currently Suhakam vice-chairman.

“Some even said Sabahans should be grateful to Malaya for giving them their independence,” he said.

Sipaun said Aug 31, 1957 was the day Malaya attained its independence.

“But that date has no significance to the people in Sabah and Sarawak as it was only Malaya that became independent then.”

He said if such perceptions were allowed to prevail, there would be “a misinterpretation among some that there is a 2Malaysia”.

In this regard, he said efforts to boost the Prime Minister's 1Malaysia concept should go beyond mere slogans.

"We will only feel a sense of unity in the heart when the Government is not perceived as marginalising or discriminating against anyone, and is instead seen to be fair to all, regardless of their race, religion or culture," said Sipaun.

He said Sept 16 should thus be given due recognition and celebrated on a national scale. - The Star

To those needing to brush up on Civics 101, here are some Wikipedia links:

1) [Hari Malaysia](#)

2) [Hari Merdeka](#)

For fuller background on conditions re Forming of Malaysia:

i) [The Cobbold Commission](#)

ii) [The 20-point Agreement between Sabah and the federal government](#)

iii) The 18-point Agreement (alas, unavailable on the internet). Efforts are being made to acquire a copy of it. We will upload onto this website when we have the document.