

Empowerment and Identity of Indigenous Minorities in the SEAsian Nation-States: A comparative Perspective on Indonesian and Malaysian Case-Studies

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Abstract

"The paper is an attempt to evolve a comparative perspective on the empowerment and Identity of indigenous minorities in the context of two Southeast Asian Nation-states- Malaysian and Indonesia. The Indonesian case will focus on the Kalimantan Dayaks, whilst the Malaysian case will focus on the Sarawak Dayaks and the Malaysian Peninsular Orang Asli. The Kalimantan Case-study will focus on the "Pancur Kasih" movement in the context of an organisation operating without state patronage but yet emerging as it were, as quite an effective and self-sustaining grassroot-based channel of empowerment of Dayak political identity. The Malaysian Orang Asli case, through POASM (Persatuan Orang Asli Semenanjung) emerged out of state patronage and by contrast, finds itself more controlled and limited by bureaucratic/legal rulings and state control. The Sarawak case-study provides an example of empowerment through formalised political party organisation, which stands in contrast to both the Orang Asli and the Kalimantan Dayaks. Here the issues take a different platform but it also raises certain questions relating to other issues of Dayak representation and identity in the Malaysian nation-state".