

Perpaduan Anak Negeri (PAN) Sabah - Native Solidarity of Sabah

P O Box 423, 89507 Penampang, Kota Kinabalu
Sabah, Malaysia.

PRESS STATEMENT

Embargo: Please do not use before 1.00 p.m 22 February 2014 Saturday.

We assemble here today in Nabawan with thanksgiving in our hearts. God is indeed good to us. It is the Lord God who has brought His people together to face the challenges confronting the church brought about by the extremism of political Islam.

Although the Mamangkis movement spearheaded by Perpaduan Anak Negeri (PAN) Sabah or the Native Solidarity of Sabah, is less than four months old, we are already witnessing an unprecedented unity among Christians. This new found unity in the body of Christ is not only within denominations but also it also cuts across all denominations. It is, therefore, not wrong to say that there is not only unity in diversity in the church but also unity when confronted with adversity. We give all the glory to God in granting us unity.

The inaugural Mamangkis was in Penampang immediately after last Christmas. Rev Datuk Jerry Dusing, President of SIB Sabah, graced the occasion. Last month in Ranau, Bishop Melter Tais an Assistant Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Sabah who officiated the Mamangkis there. I count it a great privilege to be given the honour in the Mamangkis here in Nabawan today. I would have loved it very much to be together with all of you but I have a prior engagement. Rest assured, I am with you in spirit and my colleague Rev. Ronnie Luni will do the honour on my behalf. This itself is evidence of our solidarity as brothers and sisters in Christ.

This denominational unity among the SIB, Anglican and Roman Catholic congregants thus far is reason enough for us to proclaim the Mamangkis as our victory song today.

It is our prayer and hope that in the coming months where the Mamangkis move from town to town and kampung to kampung, this move of the Holy Spirit of God in uniting the Church of Jesus Christ will gather momentum as more denominations will join us and march arm in arm for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, while we proclaim the goodness of our God to us, let us not be dulled into complacency. The enemy is not only at our door, it has even entered into our midst. By enemy we do not mean our Muslim brothers and sisters who we have been living side by side in good neighbourliness for generations. This is in keeping with the teaching of our respective faiths to love our neighbours. Indeed we should continue to love one another regardless of the extremism of political Islam that threatens to poison the respect we have for one another.

Recently we received sad news of conversion of our people to Islam through deception and inducement in Pitas in the Parliamentary constituency of Marudu. It is obvious the extremist elements of political Islam are targeting the hard core poor districts of Sabah for their dubious conversions.

Right here in the Pensiangan parliamentary constituency again we recently received news that several Christian villages are being systematically converted by dubious means.

Our elected political leaders, even though Anak Negeri and Christians themselves, have so far been silent as if nothing is amiss.

History tells us that on 1 August 1972, the then Chief Minister of Sabah, Tun Mustapha Harun announced the policy of unity under the USNO government as “one language, one culture, one religion” in Kota Kinabalu in the presence of the then Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and his deputy Tun Razak Hussein.

The following year on 27 Sept 1973, the State Constitution of Sabah was amended to make Islam the religion of Sabah.

This is in gross violation of the 20-point agreement that Sabah insisted before consenting to confederate with Malaya, Sarawak and Singapore to form Malaysia. The first point is that there should be complete freedom of religion in Sabah. We only agree to Islam being the religion of the Federation and not Sabah and that Malaysia is to be a secular country.

Today, after 42 years of the “one language, one culture, one religion” policy, the Anak Negeri has become restless wanderers and aliens worst than second-class citizens in our own land. This is our history, a history of a betrayed people. If we forget our history, we forfeit our destiny as a people called forth by God for His glory alone.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us make it abundantly clear. We are gathered here not to incite hatred or disaffection against the government nor against Islam.

We are here to raise the Mamangkis cry to rally our people to defend ourselves against encroachment against our faith. We are not making new demands. We are just asking others to respect what is already our constitutional and human rights to practise our faith in peace and without interference from the state.

The Mamangkis is part of our cultural heritage, our identity as the definitive people of Sabah. In the old days, this was associated with paganism and head hunting. But today the Mamangkis is executed in the context of our Christian heritage.

The Bible assures us in the end the battle belongs to the Lord and we are confident He alone will hear our prayers. We shall be victorious in the Lord. We shall lift up our voices again in a victory song, a Mamangkis song of joy.

Today, here in Nabawan, just as we have done in Ranau and Penampang, we are erecting a memorial stone and dedicate it to God and consecrate ourselves before Him and Him alone.

The Bible tells us: “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

The Bible also tells us when our Lord and Saviour Jesus, the Son of God, comes again: “And I heard a loud voice from the throne (in heaven) saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Rev 21:3-4).

This is our hope, this is our redemption. This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is our Mamangkis; our covenant with the one true God that we will turn from our wicked ways with the blessed assurance that Christ is faithful and just and will forgive our sins. We will be His people and we shall not worship false gods in our midst.

Let us seek the blessings of God. Let us give Him all the praises and glory. Let us Mamangkis. Amen.

Officiated by Bishop Datuk Cornelius Piong.

This statement is issued by Perpaduan Anak Negeri (PAN) Sabah in conjunction with the "Mamangkis" celebration held at the SIB Salarom Taka Church, Nabawan, Sabah. For further information please contact PAN committee member George Mikil 0138608285