

A happy day for three mums

NRD facilitates citizenship application for overseas-born kids

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PETALING JAYA: It was a happy day for three mothers when the National Registration Department (NRD) facilitated their application for Malaysian citizenship for their overseas-born children.

"They went in and the NRD officers (in Putrajaya) swiftly and efficiently facilitated the process of obtaining their citizenship confirmation certificate, which will be issued within three months.

"Then, their children will finally be recognised as Malaysian citizens and the mothers can use the citizenship confirmation certificate to obtain their children's identity cards," said Association of Family Support and Welfare Selangor and Kuala Lumpur (Family Frontiers) president Suriani Kempe.

This was following the Court of Appeal's dismissal of an application by the government to stay a Dec 22 High Court decision, which ruled that children born abroad to Malaysian mothers with foreign spouses can be given automatic citizenship.

The three women who visited the NRD headquarters were among the plaintiffs named in the case.

Suriani Kempe said the trip to the NRD breathed life into the High Court judgment and confirmed that Malaysian women had the equal right to automatically confer citizenship to their children.

She said in a Facebook posting that the three women successfully obtained forms for citizenship documents as authorised by the High Court yesterday.

The NRD, she said, had informed Family Frontiers that the department would be instructing all other NRD offices in the country as well as Malaysian embassies and Malaysian High Commissions to facilitate Malaysian mothers on this matter.

She thanked NRD for their help in facilitating the application pro-



Huge victory: Teoh (left) and two other mothers visiting the NRD in Putrajaya to submit documents. — Bernama

cess under Article 14(1)(b) of the Federal Constitution and urged similarly affected mothers to go to the nearest NRD office to obtain a MyKad or MyKid for their children.

In the same statement, Family Frontiers also highlighted the High Court judgment to dismiss the government's application, even before the appeal proper is heard by the Court of Appeal in March 2022, as respectful of Malaysian women's status as equal citizens, individuals of equal worth and dignity as men.

"To continue with the appeal makes no logical, moral or economic sense, as it is devoid of compassion and blind to the lived realities of Malaysian women and their children," it read.

One of the plaintiffs, Adlyn Adam Teoh, said she was relieved by the conclusion to the matter, which had been troubling them for years.

"I am immensely relieved that the court order was followed (by

NRD) and I look forward to the department's processing of the relevant documents for my child's citizenship.

"This has been long overdue," she added.

On Dec 18 last year, Suriani and six Malaysian women filed the suit, seeking six specific court orders, including a declaration that Section 1(b) and Section 1(c) be read harmoniously with Article 8(2) to include Malaysian mothers as a condition for children born abroad to be given automatic Malaysian citizenship.

They named the government, Home Minister and the NRD director-general as defendants.

The High Court ruled that the Malaysian mothers have the same right as Malaysian fathers under the Federal Constitution to pass on citizenship to their overseas-born children.

It also ordered the relevant

authorities to issue citizenship documents (including passports and identity cards) to children born abroad to Malaysian mothers with foreign spouses.

But on Sept 14, the defendants filed an appeal against the High Court's decision for citizenship documents to be issued to children born overseas to Malaysian mothers.

The next day, the High Court rejected the government's stay application, which led the government to go to the Court of Appeal to apply for a stay of the High Court's earlier decision.

The Court of Appeal's unanimous dismissal of the government's application on Dec 22 means that the government would have to issue citizenship-related documents upon the application for children born overseas to Malaysian mothers and their foreign spouse, even before the appeal proper is heard in March next year.