

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE EMERGENCE OF PERSONS OF INDONESIAN DESCENTS IN MINDANAO, ECONOMY CONDITION, SOCIAL CONDITION AND CURRENT NUMBERS OF PERSONS OF INDONESIAN DESCENTS**

The issue of persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao that they were threatens by losing their nationality put themselves in dilemmatic position. They claim themselves as Indonesian but they do not have supported document that proof them as Indonesian. In other side they do not want to leave Mindanao where they have been living there since their ancestor. Even up to today, they are the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of persons of Indonesian descends who lived in Mindanao.

#### **A. The Emergence of Persons of Indonesian Descents in Mindanao**

There are many reasons that become the proof of the emergence of persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao. According to Abdul Agus Majid as the immigration officer of Indonesian Consulate in Davao City, they are traditional passer, who are mostly come from the Marore, Miangas, Sangihe and Talaud Island. The results of registration records that there are families who come to Mindanao as early as 1874. The close border between Indonesia and Philippines also becomes another reason that they often visit each other across the border until they move to Mindanao and settled their life there (Majid, 2016).

In the book published by Indonesian Consulate in Davao City under the title “*Menyibak Tabir WNP*”, there are some perspectives about the coming of persons of Indonesian descents to Mindanao.

### **a. General Perspective on the Arrival of PIDs**

Generally, Persons of Indonesian Descents who were lived in Southern Mindanao, Philippines is a resident of border areas of Indonesia who came from Sangir and Talaud island, North Sulawesi Province which has decades lived in Mindanao, in fact most of them also have been born and breed in Mindanao without obtaining a clear status from the local government as the local citizen. Their arrival records their own history, which until now the persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao have had over four generations.

The first generation were born and raised in the Philippines which generally they do not have adequate education and skills and just rely on their armed force. Most of their livelihoods still depend on working as farmers and fishermen to maintain their lives on daily basis (Alam, 2006).

The second generation, the social life of persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao has begun to experience improvement in terms of the economy, but for the aspect of education is still left behind. Most of them are illiterate and substandard in speaking Indonesian language, their livelihoods are still has not directed specifically in their welfare. This caused a condition in which they less using the results of their own work on the basis of potential mindset, to be able to handle and solve their daily problems (Alam, 2006).

The third generation, the Socio-economic conditions in the third generation has increased, so is education. The improvement of those things are due to the palm plant as their main income, so they can maintain and fill their daily needs, as well as to fund their children in higher education. However, the results of palm plant

cannot regard them as a person who has sufficient income, because as coconut farmers, factory workers and traditional fishermen their welfare level is still very far from expectations. Higher education can bring a positive impact on both themselves and for the family. They are trying to change the pattern of life by finding a better job, despite having to deal with the regulations as illegal migrants. For the four generations, this generation is the "transition generation", where there is a movement of people from one area to another to look for a decent living (Alam, 2006).

#### **b. Tabukan Kingdom**

The history of the arrival of the citizen in the Philippines were found in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, there were some kingdoms on the Sangir island One of them is Tabukan Kingdom, which their territory covers the whole of the Sangir island and the East. One of the kings named Buleghan, He has a son and his name is Pandiang. One day Pandiang followed by several servants went to the sea to catch some fish at Rainis/Talau Islands. On the way up to the Rainis island, suddenly there came a great wind storm, causing them to not be able to reach the destination and the boat which brought them were washed away, and finally reached an island called Balut Island. They arrived in Balut Island, at a place called Tube (near Tinina) (Alam, 2006).

On their arrival at the island they were trying to find food and because of that they were going surrounds the Balut Island. At that time Balut Island has not been inhabited by humans. They saw that the island is very good to be inhabited by humans. After the weather in the island become calm weather, they went back to

Sangihe, Talaud and on their arrival at their kingdom they tell to the citizen of their kingdom about their experiences when their boat was float and they were coming to inhabited island, they told the citizen that the island is a very natural state good. A month after they were in Tabukan, they intend to come back to Balut Island, bringing their family and friends and also they bring some types of plants, such as potatoes, corn, and others to be planted in Balut Island. Thus began the arrival of Indonesian people from Sangihe and Talaud island to Balut Island, formerly they named it as "Marulung" which means "the mainland". They want to "Mengaling BANUA" which means livelihood (Alam, 2006).

### **c. Sriwijaya Kingdom Arrival in Mindanao**

As the historical background of the arrival of citizens in Mindanao, most likely is the symptom of the power attraction "magnet" of Indonesian marine (sailor/fishermen) ancestors' footprints since a hundred years ago. Far away from the area before the arrival of sailors from the Spanish, Portuguese, English, and Dutch, Indonesian fishermen has sailed the oceans and explore Indonesia from the north side until they reached to the Philippine archipelago and landed in Mindanao and nearby areas. The first land that the Indonesian ancestors entered in the Central Philippine archipelago areas is the Visayas region, which are Cebu, Leyte, and Bohol they were the group of people from the Sriwijaya kingdom in Palembang, South Sumatra. The aims and objectives of the group is probably to expand the trade relations outside of Indonesian archipelago and the power to looking for friendly relations (Alam, 2006).

The hospitality that was brought by the Indonesian people were the reason that they were accepted by local Filipino. This relation effected the marital relationship among the Indonesian youth and local Filipino which cause intermarriage among them. Then they started to build their family and has many children which become the Indonesian descents. When talking about this descent, it has been really difficult to track them today because they were born by the old Indonesian descent which now has been settled in the Philippines, and they have become as the citizens of the Philippines (Alam, 2006).

From the explanation above and from what the writer found in the field during the international community service in Davao city regarding the issue of stateless status of persons of Indonesian descents, they are many version of how Indonesian people coming to the Philippines. Even many of them also have been living in Mindanao since their grandparents moved there. They admit that even they have been settled for long time in Mindanao, they still want to come back to Indonesia. Not everyone wants to come back to Indonesia but for those who wants to return to Indonesia there are some factors that that still make them cannot reach their dream yet about returning to Indonesia the unclear nationality is the main problem. Besides that, their economic life and social life condition sometimes become the force of their willingness to return to Indonesia getting bigger.

### **B. Economic Condition of Persons of Indonesian Descents (PIDs)**

The persons of Indonesian descents that lived in Mindanao with undocumented citizen status find many difficulties in finding job to support their family. It is hard

for them to find regular job because the company will not allow them due to the lack of supported document to show them that they belong to any country. That is why from economic life the persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao is categorized as poor and less wealthy. Many of them forced to fearlessly find a job and working secretly but as the feedback, they got low salary which also sometimes still can not support their family's need.

Most of their livelihood are based on copra workers, hard labor in rice grinding factory, farmers, labor in warehouse, household assistant, workers in some shops, Indonesian consulate staff, and traditional fisherman. As the farmers and labor, they work in field that belong to Filipinos by sharing 1/3 of all production during the harvest season especially in copra field. There are some of them own palm plantation but sometimes the production of palm itself is not really promising (Alam, 2006).

Besides that, another jobs that become the source of the livelihood of person of Indonesian descents in Mindanao is as a fisherman. The fisherman mostly is working in the fishing company in General Santos. The fishes that catched by the fisherman are mostly from Indonesia. They catch the fish in Indonesia's sea illegally. The reason of the fishing company employed the persons of Indonesian descents is most of them can speak bahasa so they will be recognize as fisherman from Indonesia. Even sometimes, most of them caught by the Indonesian maritime soldier and getting arrested due to their action.

Year by year the persons of Indonesian descents who works as fisherman were often being forced to do illegal fishing and the numbers of getting caught and arrested are increase. Additionally, regarding to the policy from Susi as the maritime minister of Indonesia that will bomb and sink all the boat that catch the fish illegally in Indonesia's sea. Due to this many of fisherman lost their job and until today they just do the work that they can do or remain jobless.

The women of persons of Indonesian descents also help their husbands in supporting the family need by opening the small shop that sell vegetables, dishes, snacks and drinks. Because if the source is only from what their husbands get as their salary it will not be enough. The lack of the source from the their economic life gives a domino effect to another aspect too such as in health and education level.

They do not have enough source to visit doctor or public health facilities when they got illness before, but now they got PhilHealth card which is supported by the Philippines government. In another hand when they got serious illness they still can not afford for the specific hospital or doctor.

Beside of their status as a Persons of Indonesian descents which makes their economic life not really in good condition, the lack of their economic life also gives impact their social life. The vertical mobility in the meaning of the improvement of social status is indeed really hard to be achieved. This thing indeed is not the fault of the persons of Indonesian descents. The economic policy of Philippines government should prioritize the need of the Philippines society rather than

foreigners. Even there is no country in the world that prioritize the interest of foreigners instead of their own society.

### **C. The Social Condition of Persons of Indonesian Descents (PIDs)**

Talking about the social life of persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao, actually they live together peacefully. However the domino effect of their economic life is somehow affected to some of persons of Indonesian descents' social life which lived surrounded by the Filipino. The Filipino which has more advantage and opportunities in many aspects that give them more advantage and power in their social life put persons of Indonesian descents in burden because somehow the persons of Indonesian descents felt marginalized from the community. In other side also the persons of Indonesian descent live peacefully without any feeling of being marginalized. This phenomenon happened because of their status as the "undocumented citizen" that threat them to be a stateless person.

Because they are still regarded as foreigners, they are required to have an ACR (Alien Certificate of Registration) from the local immigration authorities, but looking at their conditions as they were living in poor condition, even almost completely lacks the ability to support the maintenance of ACR (especially the processing of immigration documents - such as passport, etc.) so that is why most of them become illegal (undocumented) and potentially become stateless person. This condition (undocumented, are at risk of becoming stateless) causes the PIDs are vulnerable to get an exploitation in employment field and another treatment arbitrarily. Sometimes the Indonesian descents have to face the reality where they



got different treatment from the employer as paid lower wages by employers, loses the right of access to community services, forced to do illegal fishing that mostly done in Bitung and another Indonesia's sea area, doing smuggling of illegal goods as well as vulnerable to be involved into terrorism-related crimes (Majid, 2016).

Due to two conditions above that has been explained by the writer caused many of Persons of Indonesian Descents stay in Mindanao because they do not have enough source to process their document to make them become a legal citizen whether as Indonesian or local Filipino. It makes the number of Persons of Indonesian Descents keep growing year by year.

#### **D. The current numbers of Persons of Indonesian Descents**

The numbers of persons of Indonesian descents is getting higher year by year. On March 3, 2016 at the Indonesian Consulate in Davao City received a delegation from the Department of Justice, Bureau of Immigration and representatives of UNHCR Philippines who attend to report the overall results of the implementation of the event registration and confirmation of nationality of Persons of Indonesian Descents residing in Southern Philippines which lasted from the end of 2014 to February 2016 (Majid, 2016).

From the data that has been collected, there are around 8,745 persons of Indonesian descents in Mindanao has been registered. The registration has been done in several province and were classified into some classification. The registration of persons of Indonesian descent can be explained and categorized by these table following description:

Table 2.1

The current numbers of Persons of Indonesian Descents

<b>Data by Province</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name of Provinces</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Data by Province</b>	North Cotabato	133 persons
	Davao City	279 persons
	Davao Oriental	679 persons
	Davao Del Sur	2.777 persons
	Sultan Kudarat	175 persons
	South Cotabato	688 persons
	General Santos	859 persons
	Sarangani	3.155 persons

<b>Self-declaration</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Self-Declaration</b>	Admit as Indonesian Descents	3.566 persons
	Admit as Filipino	4.248 persons
	Admit as Dual-Citizenship	884 persons
	Admit as another country citizen	6 persons
	Unknown	41 persons

<b>Nationality based on Indonesian Law and Philippines Law</b>		
<b>Based on Indonesian Law</b>		
<b>Category and Amount</b>	Indonesian Citizen	2.613 persons
	Foreign Citizen	2.112 persons
	Dual-Citizenship	285 persons
	Unknown	3.735 persons
<b>Based on Philippines Law</b>		
<b>Category and Amount</b>	Philippines Citizen	2.504 persons
	Foreign Citizen	2.067 persons
	Dual Citizenship	557 persons
	Unknown	3.617 persons

<b>Document Ownership</b>		
<b>Indonesia's Document Ownership</b>		
<b>Category and Amount</b>	Indonesia Passport Ownership	204 persons
	Indonesia Election Card Ownership	2.194 persons
	ACR Ownership (as Indonesian)	1.317 persons
	Has reported to Indonesian Consulate in Davao City	1.885 persons
<b>Philippine's Document Ownership</b>		
<b>Category and Amount</b>	Philippine passport ownership	71 persons
	Philippine Election Card Ownership	2.875 persons
	Certificate of Birth Ownership	2.875 persons
	Certificate of Marriage Ownership	5.162 persons

(Source: (Majid, 2016))