

SABAH AND SARAWAK IN MALAYSIA: FORTY YEARS LATER

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INTRODUCTION

Nation building is a primary goal of any independent and sovereign nation state. The concept conjures various meanings. Nevertheless, the general ideas about nation building may be briefly summarised as follows. Firstly, it is primarily concerned with the pursuit of political integration. This is crucial as the new nation state attempts to build a working and sustainable political consensus to run the country. Secondly, the success of forging political integration is related directly to the number of social elements that are found within each nation state. Naturally, the more diverse the social elements of a given nation state, the more challenging the task becomes for that nation state in forging political integration. This diversity can be further compounded where diversities are also exacerbated by factors of race and ethnicity. Thirdly, the objective of and success in forging political and social integration are critical in converging the national energies and resources in order to promote social advancement and economic development.

In the light of the above definition, this paper aims to discuss the process of nation building particularly in relations to the states of Sabah and Sarawak. After forty years in Malaysia, where do the states of Sabah and Sarawak stand in the process of nation building? Are the two states now more united and integrated with the rest of the states in the Federation? What are the contending issues and problems of nation building with regards to Sabah and Sarawak? What more can be done? These are the major issues that will be addressed by this paper.

However, before proceeding to discuss them, a brief background of how Sabah and Sarawak came to be an integral element in the formation of the Federation of Malaysia is important in providing a context in which to appreciate the accomplishments that have been made over the last forty years and to understand the continuing problems that need to be addressed.

A BRIEF BACKGROUND

On 16 September 2003, Sabah and Sarawak will be celebrating their forty years of independence through the formation of the Federation of Malaysia. In that span of time, the countries had launched six five-year Malaysia Plans that spanned two Outline Perspective Plans, namely OPP1 and OPP2. By the end of the OPP1 and

the expiry of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the federal government had been somewhat successful in promoting the restructuring of society and redistributing the ownership of corporate wealth of about 20% for the Malay/bumiputera individuals and interests (Malaysian Plan 6 & OPP2). In this context, where do Sabah and Sarawak as well as their peoples stand? How and in what ways have they benefited from the fruits of merdeka?

It would not be entirely incorrect to say that the 1963 independence then had come rather unexpectedly for the peoples of Sabah and Sarawak. It appeared then that the peoples of both states would have just been as happy to have their states continued to be crown colonies. There did not appear any immediate need to get rid of the British. Therefore, when there was a proposal to form the Federation of Malaysia in the early 1960s that included both states, the peoples of Sabah and Sarawak had given mixed reactions (Hanna 1964). The proposal had hastened the emergence of ethnic identity as each ethnic group started to view the proposal in terms of gains and losses or the advantages and disadvantages through their respective ethnic perspectives (Leigh 1974).

History had recorded that the indigenous Malays and Melanau of Sarawak were equally divided between those who had supported the Malaysia proposal and those who were opposed to it. The indigenous Dayaks were said to be split in three ways: between those who supported the idea and another who were against it as well as a third group who were too ill-informed to be able to make any intelligent decision either way. The majority of the Chinese population was reported to be against it. The pattern of reception towards Malaysia in Sabah then was also similar: the indigenous were split, while the larger portion of its Chinese population was not in favour.

Despite some initial misgivings, leaders of Sabah and Sarawak were able to amass enough support to back their stand to join the Federation of Malaya and Singapore to form the Federation of Malaysia in September 1963. This had been accomplished after vigorous negotiations and accommodations between various parties involved.¹ First, it has been based on the persuasion that there were economic benefits to be gained by the inclusion of Sabah and Sarawak into Malaysia. It was argued that the more economically advanced Federation of Malaya had the necessary experiences that would be beneficial to both Bornean states that were relatively backward. In this connection, several communities and native leaders of Sabah and Sarawak had been brought over to the Peninsula and shown development sites and economic progresses that Malaya had by then accomplished. For the majority, this had proven to be a very convincing approach to win support. Those who had gone on the eye opening tours to Malaya then came back to their respective states advocating strong support for the Malaysia proposal. Secondly, perhaps more effectively, there was the readiness on the part of leaders from the Peninsula to accommodate and accord special constitutional provisions that the Bornean states had demanded in order to allay their fears in the larger federation. As Sabah and Sarawak were quite underdeveloped compared to some states in the Peninsula,

there was then the fear that the latter could easily overrun both states. Some of these special protections that were given to the two states have since been repealed or have lapsed with time. They had included, for examples, matters pertaining to the language issue,² control over law relating to immigration of both states,³ and labour control – e.g. lawyers from the Peninsula cannot, without the approval of both states, appear before the High Court in either Sabah or Sarawak.⁴

In the last forty years, relations between the state leaderships of Sabah and Sarawak with leaders of the federal government have not always been smooth. Tensions and disagreements have occasionally emerged from time to time. At times, these disagreements had been subtly and diplomatically expressed and at other times they have let to a fall out between leaders of the state and federal governments. Most of these tensions and disagreements have focused on the alleged neglect of and lag in development for the states and their plural inhabitants. In addition, allegations that fuelled tensed relations have also centred on the supposed federal insensitivities towards the local character of Sabah and Sarawak. Consequently, the allegation went on, including uneven pattern of development that occurred between the various indigenous communities.

Unfortunately, although some of these allegations of uneven development do have some merits, they have almost always been expressed by political leaders whose political fortunes have taken a down turn. Hence, their complaints were always seen as political attempts to rejuvenate their declining political careers and were therefore not to be taken seriously. For examples, in 1987, Rahman Yaakub's allegation that the Malays were being sidelined by Taib Mahmud's government did not carry much weight among Malay voters. Why? Six years before, he was the Chief Minister. The allegations therefore failed to stir the Malay emotion and deliver the Malay support to Permas (Parti Rakyat Malaysia Sarawak).⁵ Similarly, the drumming of Dayakism⁶ by PBDS politicians did not further increase the party's popularity and the number of seats that were already held by its incumbents.

The above situation, of course, differed substantially from the rise of Kadazandusun nationalism that swept PBS (Parti Bersatu Sabah) to power in Sabah in 1985 and later helped the party to cling on to power in the state for a decade, i.e from 1985-1994 (James Chin 1994). However, the situation must also be distinguished from that which happened in Sarawak in 1987. In Sabah, the call to rise and overcome the Berjaya-led (Parti Berjaya) state government was due to the latter's blatant neglect and excessiveness. Joseph Pairin Kitingan's rise then was therefore seen as rising to the occasion as opposed to an attempt to resurrect his political misfortune under Berjaya. His leadership of and call through PBS therefore provided the rallying point against Berjaya and the leadership of Harris Salleh (Tan Chee Koon, 1986). Furthermore, Kuala Lumpur then was known to be rather unhappy with Berjaya and the leadership of Harris Salleh as well.

That those occasional outbursts of displeasures and complaints were mainly uttered by "down and out" political leaders of Sabah and Sarawak however, should not entirely be dismissed as such. Granted that while they were still in the state

government, they may have been ever tactful in order to protect their political fortune and positions. Some of the allegations, nevertheless, such as of uneven development as well as neglect in some areas, do have some bases.⁷ In OPP3, the federal government for the first time acknowledged that much more is needed in order to bring 'bumiputera minorities'⁸ into the mainstream of national development. In response to this call, INDEP (Sabah)-SDGA (Sarawak) organised a joint seminar to address the issue.⁹

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ BENEFITS

It cannot be denied that in the last forty years, Malaysia has grown out from being a backward former British colony into a modern nation state that is politically stable and in large measure socio-economically successful compared to many nation states in the region. In Malaysia, its national political system works to provide the general framework for political participation from a broad sphere of interests based in particular not only on ethnicity but also increasingly on other dimensions such as class, as a result of the emergence of a new middle class. All major ethnic groups in the country continue to participate in the national politics. Representatives of smaller ones and those who are not elected have also found their ways into the national assembly through appointment into the senatorial chamber of the Malaysian parliament.

In Sabah and Sarawak, similar pattern of political management appears to be in place although the political matrix in each state appears more fluid. This is because the demographic character of the two states differs fundamentally from that of the Peninsula. This difference has provided the basis for a fragile political arrangement that is more apparent in Sabah than in Sarawak. Some of the issues relating to this are discussed in the following section.

Comparatively, the peoples of Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak, are in a better position economically than many of those in many nation states in the third world or developing bloc. Many socio-economic indicators pointed to such improvement such as the decreasing poverty rate, increasing literary rate, expansion of income for the average households and increasing life expectancy.¹⁰ Since the early 1980s, the country economy has expanded substantially and has provided economic opportunities not only for domestic employment but also for many foreign workers from developing countries particularly labourers from Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar. This has been so because the better-educated Malaysian population had become more selective and had begun to shun menial or routine work. However, this is not to deny that there are patterns of uneven development between regions and between and within various ethnic communities as well as pockets of poverty in some remote parts of the country. Some of these problems that continue to persist merely require better management and distribution systems instead of arising from the lack of real development.

Malaysia is also successful in the social sphere. The country prides itself in having a diverse ethnic group with varieties of socio-cultural differences and practices.

Since 1969, the country has been able to pacify the ethnic overtones that tend to flare up. Ethnic demands were managed through political consultation within the national elite that draws its membership from all major ethnic communities. Occasionally though, the national elite would allow some inter-ethnic bargaining to slide into the open. This was when tension would build up to an extremely dangerous level especially those issues that cut across ethnic lines. Ethnic sensitivities appeared to be still high and it does not look that peoples are quite ready to accept criticisms, complaints or demands that cut across ethnic boundaries. It appears that it would be easier to accept criticisms and complaints from a person who shares similar ethnic background than from another who is from a different ethnic community.¹¹ This is a fact that has not been watered down by about forty years of being together in Malaysia. Similarly, even as Malaysia enters the twenty-first century, it does not seem very likely that such draconian laws as the Internal Security Act (ISA) is about to be liberalised (reads: loosen up). The reason is simple: It (ISA) is still very much needed to check tensions that could easily be aroused by fanning ethnic sentiments by certain quarters. Therefore, it basically boils down to the hard fact that the Malaysian peoples are still very chauvinistic, although many would be quick to object to this sort of labeling.

CONTENDING ISSUES

There are many issues that continue to pose challenges to the process of fully integrating Sabah and Sarawak within the Federation. Many of these challenges arise from the unique position that the two states were accorded within the federation. In time, the special provisions themselves played an important part in providing "excuses" (i.e. basis) for Sabah and Sarawak to differ from other states in many aspects. Even when the two states are marginalised, it is all right and expected to be so because they are "special".

Some of the major challenges that the two states continue to face in the process of integrating into the larger federation are discussed under various sub-themes in this section. These lists are not exhaustive, but they merely represent important ones and those that seem to continue to attract recurrent concern in both states.

People to People Relations

People to people relations are really the basis of relations between different ethnic (and including racial) groups. There can be no substitution for this. Legislations may attempt to provide the basis or infrastructure for interactions, but in the final analysis, it falls on the peoples to initiate contacts and build friendships across the ethnic (or racial) boundary. This matter cannot be forced nor legislated upon the peoples. Since Malaysia and specifically after the ethnic riots of 13th May 1969, the federal government has laid down several political, social and economic infrastructures to assist in promoting national integration between peoples of different ethnic backgrounds as well as different geographical regions. For the peoples of Sabah and

Sarawak, what have been achieved over the last forty years?

After forty years, it is not entirely incorrect to say that the peoples of Sabah and Sarawak continue to feel 'distant' within Malaysia — i.e. either in terms of social relations to other ethnic groups or in relation to their position *vis-à-vis* the others in the mainstream of national development. Not many Sabahans and Sarawakians are ready to openly admit this, for fear of adverse repercussions and selective discriminations that will be meted against them. But privately many are quick to complain about their personal experiences in their limited dealings with their counterparts from the Peninsula, especially in organisational settings such as in the work place, especially in federal government departments that maintain offices or branches in both states. A substantial number of Sabahans and Sarawakians still feel that when it comes to opportunities for promotion and advancement, the playing field is not leveled and that they are competing from positions of disadvantages. The former likes to believe that this is due to regional differences while the peninsular argument would be that consideration has been based entirely on improving (or changing) merit system.

Naturally, many isolated incidents of irregularities or anomalies that they heard of or experienced themselves do not help allay the above negative perceptions. For example, there was a lot of displeasure and disappointment in Sarawak over the supposed 'easing off' of a Sarawakian from a position of a director in one of the department in a certain federal ministry several years back. The Sarawak-born Director was due to retire in a few more months, but it appeared that he was forced to go off earlier so that another colleague, a peninsular candidate, could retire from the same post. Although the issue was perhaps amicably settled between the parties concerned, that it had created some furor did not go down well with the peoples of Sarawak in particular. This was what it appeared to be and the basis of displeasure and disappointment.

In another example, a certain public institution of higher learning refuse, up to this moment, to recognise and therefore award the "regional allowance"¹² package to its staff who are hailed from the two East Malaysian states. This refusal has created ill feeling between the various peoples involved — i.e. in term of inter-ethnic relations and especially for the promotion of regional integration. This problem is no longer a big issue. The case with this particular institution is a very isolated one and a rare case of calculated display of institutional arrogance buttressed by ignorance.

Lack of coherence and integrated effort in the implementation of public policies is the major hindrance to the development of good people to people relations. Examples that are already elaborated in this section demonstrated how perceptions shaped relations. The type of relations that would emerge depends to a large measure on how people approach the issue — i.e. are they flexible and accommodative, understanding and tolerance, and patience and have a sense for fair play.

Political Infrastructure

The political setting or infrastructure is very important as it plays a direct influence

in shaping the socio-cultural and economic landscapes of the country. In Malaysia, the political infrastructure or ideology is quite clear about the type of society it intends to mould and that is a united and integrated Malaysian population¹³ that would later give rise to the emergence of a united *bangsa* Malaysia. The national ideology is also equally important especially in specifying the kind of social relations it wants to structure for its plural population. And lastly, the national political ideology is also very clear and explicit about the nature of economic ownership that it favours and ones that would be consistent with the nature of a plural society.

In politics, this means instituting a grand coalition where all major ethnic groups are being provided opportunities to take part in the running of the government — i.e. at both the federal and state levels. All major ethnic groups such as the Malay, Chinese and Indian (of the Peninsula) and the Kadazandusun (of Sabah) and Dayak (of Sarawak) have been part of the national as well as state leadership. However, there are persistent problems that continue to confront state leaders of Sabah or Sarawak and they also continued to astound the peoples of both states. Firstly, the plural nature of both states are not fully appreciated by the federal leaders. Unlike the states in the Peninsula that are clearly dominated by one ethnic group — i.e. by the Malay, except in Pulau Pinang—Sabah and Sarawak are truly plural. No one ethnic group forms the majority; but there are several ethnic groups that are of almost equal number in term of population, especially in Sabah and to a lesser extent in Sarawak. Secondly, this demographic factor tends to be summarily dismissed and do not feature in any political consideration. Federal leaders still appear to favour the Malay leadership, although there is no more than 8% Malay in Sabah and not more than 21% in Sarawak. In both states, state leadership has always been derived from the minority population, at the expense of the larger ones. This problem, some scholars have argued, led to the marginalisation of the larger populations as minority leaderships instituted various political measures to keep the former preoccupied and therefore distracted from challenging the latter for political control.

In Sarawak, the marginalisation of the Dayak has been a critical strategy for the survival of the minority Melanau leadership. It has been done at the expense of 'dividing' the Dayaks and appeasing the Chinese.¹⁴ In Sabah, the overzealous desire to remove PBS and Pairin Kitingan from the seat of power in the state had perhaps led to the spontaneous offer of rotating the post of the chief minister as incentive to abandon the PBS and vote in the state coalition in the 1994 state general elections.¹⁵ To date, Sabah led the state in the country as one that have the most numbers of former chief ministers who are still very much active in the state politics.

Institutional Setting

Since 1969, there never exist any doubt that Malaysia wanted integration and unity. The political will was spelt out in unequivocal terms—i.e. very clearly in the New Economic Policy (NEP) that was to provide the broad basis of integration and unity. All other public policies can be seen as supplemental to the NEP. They help to realise the major objectives of the NEP to redistribute the benefits of growth. The

concern for the achievement of the NEP emerged only after its 20 year period ended in 1990. By 1990, it was shown that the NEP had helped the Malays to achieve about 20% of the national cake. Meanwhile, it was only realised in early 2000s, another 10 years later, that the NEP had not really helped the various indigenous peoples of Sabah and Sarawak especially. This was duly acknowledged in Eight Malaysia Plan (2001-2005), when the Plan referred to these peoples as 'bumiputera minorities' that needed to be given special attention in order to bring them into the mainstream of national development.

What then had gone wrong? The larger portion of the answer falls on the problem in the implementation of the policy. There are two basic shortcomings. First, there was an absence of an independent monitoring mechanism. Who are keeping tabs on what and how the various ethnic groups in the country are being affected and involved in national development? Secondly, who are watching the policy implementers so that they keep to their term of reference in discharging their public duties?

Generally, the Malaysian politicians had accepted the NEP as the basis by which the Malaysian plural society is to be shaped. However, the same vision is arguably not held deeply or shared enthusiastically by government technocrats who implement public policies, and even more so by private entrepreneurs who are driven purely by profits. It is this dispassionate detachment from the basic public policy and national objectives that has led to deviations and shortcomings in the overall national performance in restructuring and poverty eradication. Consequently, while the Malay socioeconomic position may have improved substantially, the indigenous or the other bumiputera communities are being economically segregated or separated by different levels of economic performance or attainment. The existence of these socioeconomic gaps or differences therefore prevented the Malaysian society from being fully integrated as envisioned by the political architects (or the founding fathers) of the Federation of Malaysia.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The development of an integrated and united plural society in Malaysia is the major challenge of the country in the 21st century. Some prefer to call this the development of a *bangsa Malaysia*. Whichever concept is going to be adopted to describe this phenomenon (*bangsa Malaysia*), it basically refers to the emergence of a united and integrated Malaysian nation where its peoples of various backgrounds live in peace and harmony. This involves the creation among the so-called 'Malaysian people' a similar (political) worldview and social values — at least basic and universal human values that are distinguishably 'Malaysian,' and accepted by all who called themselves Malaysian or belonging to a nation called Malaysia.

It may be much easier to promote a higher level of political and economic integration. But will that also lead to integration in the social dimension? Political integration is easy. The country has achieved a remarkably high degree of political cooperation and accommodation. Governments, both at the federal and state levels

that have been formed after Malaysia in 1963, have always included leaders from all main ethnic groups in the country. No representatives from the major ethnic communities have been totally excluded. Even representatives from smaller ethnic communities have also been included in other, lower levels government such as at either state or local authorities. At these levels, their participation may even be more meaningful as opposed to at higher level ones where they may be mere symbolic. But whether these political inclusions meant real power sharing is beside the point. The strategic significance of this inclusion is the important displays that have been shown by these political co-operations. They had served to show that political cooperation could work with leaders who have the right political temperament.

Within the economic sphere, successes have been more pronounced and are also measurable. But economic sharing might not be that easy to promote. Some peoples will always have indisputable reasons for explaining why they deserve more than others, or that why others deserve so little compared to them. While government may be able to promote economic sharing in economic activities that they have primary control over, the successes at economic distribution of opportunities also rely to a large extent on sincere participation of private entrepreneur. How willing are private entrepreneurs in helping government re-structure economic participation that would reflect the moulding of a fair and economically just society? Nevertheless, having close political cooperation and higher level of inter-ethnic economic integration do not always necessarily lead to social integration as well. People of different political persuasions can still work in the same government, but disagree on basic policies and approaches to problem solving due to differences in political affiliation and subscription.

Having said all these, what are the prospects for further integration and unity among future generations of Malaysians? In the next forty years, the country is going to be led by a new group of post-independent leaders of Malaysia. However, these new groups do not share similar backgrounds and characteristics that had characterized previous Malaysian leaders from Tunku Abdul Rahman's era.¹⁶ So, are they able to amicably work together for the multi-ethnic, multi-religious Malaysia? Who are the second generation of post-independent leaders of Malaysia?

The second generation, post-independence leaders of Malaysia come from all major political parties and factions such as UMNO, PAS, MCA, MIC, PBS, PDRS, UPKO, PBB, SUPP, PBDS and SNAP.¹⁷ How and what are the bases by which they relate to each other? Whether the country is heading to a higher level of integration and unity or not depends a lot on these groups who must find ways and means to be able to appreciate each other and therefore act in a more caring and compassionate manner.

If limited interactions among leaders of the second generations are any indications to go by, their actions can be a cause for major concern and apprehension. The ways and manners by which they react to pressing situations and perilous issues do not compliment them and allay fear arising from their youthfulness in politics. Firstly, they had emerged from their own communities. Even then, they do

not have strong grassroots support or solid political base. Therefore, they frequently tend to play up to the public gallery. In other word, they ride on popular public opinion, and are not themselves political trendsetter of public opinion. Secondly, they are known and respected only in their own communities. They do not appeal to public opinion outside of their own communities. This is another important reason why they would be quick to play to the opinion gallery. Third, some of these (group) leaders will eventually emerge to be national leaders. Still they will not be subject to any form of direct endorsement from the other communities. Consequently, they would continue to feel that they do not need to seek the moral approval of the other groups. Hence, political legitimacy would be somehow sacrificed.

CONCLUSION

Integration and unity is a goal that must be pursued without hindrance. For Malaysia, this goal will be more critical in the next century as the nation faces more complex challenges arising from the globalising world environment. That the new generations of Malaysian leaders do not share many of their forefathers' background and experiences can be an advantage for them in their effort at forging good inter-ethnic relations. As a result, these new leaders may be able to forge relations beyond the confine, scope and restrictions that have been placed before their forefathers. This may be what was needed to move ahead in forging "bangsa" Malaysia, a goal that may have eluded their forefathers.

On the other hands, however, the lack of common experiences and similar background may be a disadvantage for these new leaders as they seek to establish relations among themselves. They would lack the important terms and reference by which to proceed to build relations and relate to one another. Some past indications pointed to the fact that these young peoples tended to be not only hash and eccentric but equally serious and lacking diplomacy in dealing with peoples, especially in handling matters that are potentially sensitive and explosive. They have also shown themselves devoid of determination, persistence and patience as well as the understanding that is necessary to thread on issues of inter-ethnic significance and sensitivities.

However, all is not lost for these young, second generation leaders from the various ethnic communities. Although late, the government started to realise only by the mid-1980s that the process of nation building is a long term and an on going process. This realisation coincided with the introduction of mandatory nation building courses such as the Malaysian Politics and Government¹⁸ and Islamic Civilisation courses. When both courses were reviewed in the early 1990s, Asian Civilisation was included. In private higher education, similar courses were also mandated for private colleges that seek government accreditation.¹⁹ The main idea behind making these courses compulsory is the perceived need to familiarise Malaysians with their country's unique history and its diverse cultures. In a sense, it was to provide the "link" and a historical human content from which to build upon inter-ethnic relations into the 21st century and beyond.

NOTAHUJUNG

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1 Various meetings, negotiations and persuasions went on before some forms of agreements were reached; some of the processes that were involved may be seen from general text on the subject such as in Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah and Jayum A. Jawan's (1997) *Kenegaraan Malaysia* as well as Hanna's (1964) *Formation of Malaysia*, and also James Ongkili's (1967) *The Borneo Response to Malaysia*.

2 This has since expired when in 1974, for example, Sarawak decided to fully adopt the Malay language as the official language and the language of teaching, after a ten years grace period.

3 Although the passport ruling for visitors from the Peninsula may have been relaxed by both states, Sabah and Sarawak are still very much in control of its immigration law and this could be seen from its occasional exercises of the legislation to expel Peninsular Malaysians that either state considered undesirable. For example, in the middle of 1990s, an Indian lawyer from the Peninsula who had obtained a resident status in Sabah was expelled from the state, and so too a Peninsular Chinese during the last Sarawak state elections in 2001. A court case to challenge the validity of the power of the state over immigration matter was brought by the expelled Indian lawyer before the High Court that ruled in favour of the state government.

4 The Twenty Points enumerated the demands from Sabah for special protections; some of them were eventually written/ incorporated into the Federal Constitution (Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah & Jayum Jawan 1997); *The Federal Constitution of Malaysia* (1991); and Ongkili (1967).

5 Rahman Yaakub was the third Chief Minister of Sarawak from 1970-1981 as well as the President of the Malay-Melanau-dominated, multi-indigenous PBB (Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu). He was behind not only the formation of Permas, but the emergence of Permas-PBDS alliance as well that sought to topple Taib Mahmud's ruling coalition, the BN3 (Jayum Jawan 1987; and Yu Loon Ching 1987).

6 Then, to read (or synonymous with) underdevelopment and neglect of Dayaks.

7 For example, in Sarawak, allegations of uneven development and of neglect of some groups or regions, which formed the basis of Permas-PBDS election campaign in 1987, can be seen from a more detailed analysis provided by Jayum A. Jawan (1994) in *Iban politics and economic development*. The analysis covered the period between 1963-1991.

8 Meaning: indigenous of Sabah and Sarawak.

9 A joint seminar by Institute for Indigenous Progress (INDEP, Sabah) and Sarawak Dayak Graduate Association (SDGA, Sarawak) drew about 500 self-paying participants from the Kadazandusun and Dayak communities that converged in Kuala Lumpur for the 1½-day seminar. It was believed that a joint draft of action-oriented recommendations were being submitted to the federal government; the recommendations contained suggestions on ways and means to assist both indigenous communities propel themselves into mainstream national development. The patrons of the joint seminar were (Tan Sri) Bernard Dompok and (Datuk Amar) Leo Moggie.

10 Many indicators can be found in various Malaysia Plans and including in OPP2 and OPP3.

11 This is to say: it would be generally be alright to criticise or be critical of one's own community; but it is almost taboo for a person from one ethnic community to criticise another ethnic society. It would be easy to be accused of many undesirable things although the original intention of being critical may not had been planned that elaborate.

12 Regional allowance is an incentive package to promote the exchange/movement of staff of government departments between Sabah, Sarawak and the Peninsula. In this package, for example, a staff from the Peninsula who is posted to Sabah or Sarawak gets in addition to his current wage package (depending on his grade): (a) a housing subsidy/allowance; (b) regional allowance of between 12.5% to 15% of basic salary; and (c) a free passage home for staff and their dependents, once every two years. With the introduction of New Enumeration System (SSB), the determination of eligibility is based on birth. For example, a Sarawakian working in a government department in the Peninsula automatically gets this incentive package; it is no longer based on 'transfer' or 'posting' between the three regions.

13 The objective was to be clearly defined in later documents such as in the Vision 2020.

14 Some discussions on this matter may be found in the works of Jayum Jawan (1987 & 1994); and Yu Lon Ching (1987).

15 The offer to rotate the post of chief minister among the three main ethnic communities was perhaps made in a jest and out of desperation. Despite promise of a huge development if Barisan were to come to power, all indications showed that the PBS would sweep back to power. As it happened, PBS won with a slim majority. PBS government collapsed shortly following defections of its elected assemblymen.

16 Leaders such as Mahathir Mohamad (UMNO), Samy Vellu (MIC), Ling Liong Sik (MCA), Lim Kheng Yaik (Gerakan), Abd Taib Mahmud (PBB), Leo Moggie (PBDS), James Wong (SNAP), Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (UMNO) are perhaps the last of those that may be

labeled together with the 'independent' leaders of Malaysia—i.e. the Tunku Abdul Rahman era. This also includes Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (UMNO) who represents the last of such a leader from the former batch.

17 For simplicity, those born on or after 1957 and 1963 inclusive. In party leadership, they are commonly referred to as the 'second echelon' leaders. In UMNO, for example, that would inevitably refer to the three elected vice-presidents of the party; they also include top leadership of the youth and puteri wings.

18 In different universities, the same courses are called by different names such as Kenegaraan Malaysia (lit. Malaysian Nationhood) at Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysian Culture and Society at University Institute of Technology Malaysia.

19 LAN (Lembaga Akreditasi Negara) of the Ministry of Education Malaysia requires the teaching and inclusion in certificate, diploma or degree curriculum of such courses as the Malaysia Studies, Islamic Civilisation/Moral Education, and the Malay Language before the former considers issuing accreditation.

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