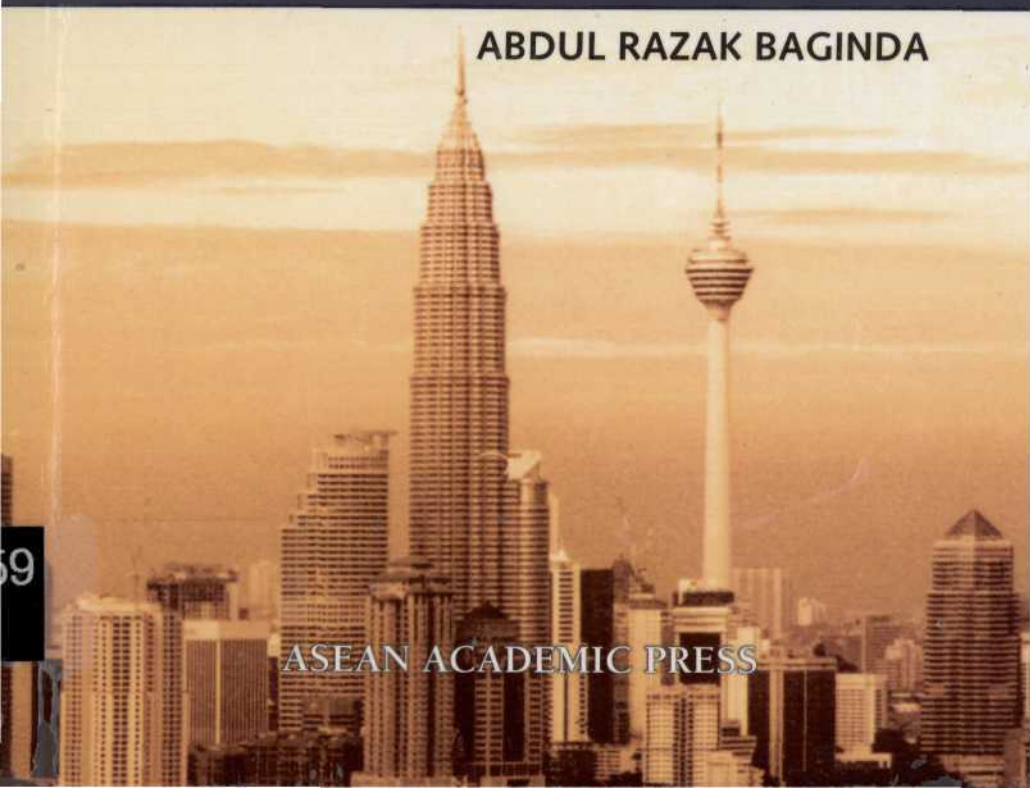




MALAYSIA IN TRANSITION

Politics and Society

ABDUL RAZAK BAGINDA



ASEAN ACADEMIC PRESS

59

MALAYSIA IN TRANSITION

Abdul Rasak Bahadur is the former director of the Malaysian Strategic Studies Centre, a private think-tank established to enhance knowledge on Malaysia and the region. He was previously the Head of Strategic Studies and International Relations at the Armed Forces Defence College as well as a member of the

country's political, economic and social trends. He was the author of several books on Malaysia and its role in the region. He was formerly a columnist with the *New Straits Times* and *The Sun*. He was awarded the *Malaya's* award by the former government for his contribution to intellectual discourse.

He holds a Master's degree from King's College, London and a research fellowship at the University of Oxford. He is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Leaders for Tomorrow as well as a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London.

ASEAN

Association of South East Asian Nations

1967

ABDUL RAZAK BAGINDA is the executive director of the Malaysian Strategic Research Centre, a private think-tank established to enhance knowledge on Malaysia and the region. He was previously the Head of Strategic Studies and International Relations at the Armed Forces Defence College as well as a member of the teaching staff at Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Abdul Razak's current research interest covers political, economic and societal trends in Asia. He speaks regularly at conferences and forums and is widely quoted by the international media. He was formerly a columnist with the *New Straits Times* and *The Sun*. He was awarded the *Légion d'honneur* by the French government for his contribution to intellectual thought.

He holds a Master's degree from King's College, London, and is currently completing his doctorate at the University of Oxford. He is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Leaders for Tomorrow, as well as a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London.

MALAYSIA IN TRANSITION

Politics and Society

ABDUL RAZAK BAGINDA



ASEAN
ACADEMIC PRESS
London

**MALAYSIA IN TRANSITION:
POLITICS AND SOCIETY**
Abdul Razak Baginda

Published by
ASEAN ACADEMIC PRESS LTD
P.O. Box 13945, London E5 0XY
England, United Kingdom
Fax: (0208) 533-5856

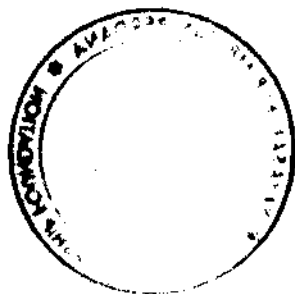
Visit us online at www.aseanacademicpress.com
and e-mail us at aapub@attglobal.net

Copyright © 2003 Abdul Razak Baginda
Design © 2003 Asean Academic Press Ltd

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted or stored in a retrieval system, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior permission of Asean Academic Press Ltd.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library
ISBN 1-901919-43-9

Printed and bound in Malaysia



For my daughter Rowena and her generation

CONTENTS

Introduction *vi*

PART I DOMESTIC ISSUES

- 1 Placing the young at the forefront of development 3
- 2 Heeding the young voices of
tomorrow's citizenry today 7
- 3 Reviving unity in the community 12
- 4 Poverty and development, not race, the real issue 16
- 5 Race relations need a steady hand 20
- 6 Malay action front not in tune with spirit of unity 24
- 7 Begin with an honest admission of racial divide 27
- 8 It is time for some humility and a higher aim 31
- 9 Cult fever suggests overhaul of moral
instruction needed 35
- 10 Dr Mahathir and Lee Kuan Yew
point the way for bureaucrats 38
- 11 Racial harmony will grow from social integration 41
- 12 Let reason reign in race relations 44
- 13 Approach racial issues maturely 47
- 14 Rendering unto Mr Chips his well-deserved dues 51
- 15 Treat English as a medium for gaining knowledge 55
- 16 Critical thinking essential for quality universities 59
- 17 Give our top scorers a sense of belonging 63
- 18 Malay students must not take quota for granted 66
- 19 Where the buck might stop over varsity troubles 69
- 20 Setting the stage for Malay scholars to excel 72
- 21 Pressure-cooker education overdue for a rethink 75
- 22 Be thankful, but get ready to stand
on your own two feet 78

MALAYSIA IN TRANSITION

- 23 Attitudinal change in electorate a tribute
to nation's growth success 81
- 24 New ways to bridge the Umno-Malay gap 84
- 25 MPs must work hard in Parliament 87
- 26 Let us now move on to serious work 91
- 27 Suggestions to revitalise Umno 95
- 28 Umno Youth must shed its elitist image 100
- 29 Umno must unite against the
"barbarians at the gates" 103
- 30 Umno must reclaim support it lost by default 106
- 31 Humility is good, but there's no room for poverty 109
- 32 Malay unity talks hold potential for much good 112
- 33 When protocol gets in the way 116
- 34 Don't let history fade into the past 120
- 35 Reinterpreting independence 123
- 36 Speaking up for a fair landing 127
- 37 Reinventing museums for a sense of history 132
- 38 Leaders should consult those they govern 135
- 39 Right of the majority to enjoy peace
takes precedent 138
- 40 Violent outbursts signal looming social disaster 141
- 41 Deviants and anarchists bode ill for the rest 145
- 42 Militants and bigots need not bother 149
- 43 One nation under the King 152
- 44 Once lost, peace won't be easy to regain 154
- 45 Towards a single whole 158
- 46 If peace is desired, then prepare for war 162

PART II INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- 47 Time for Asean to act 169
- 48 When an uprising is not a revolution 173
- 49 Giving Myanmar the break it desperately needs 177
- 50 Time for Asia to speak with one voice 180
- 51 Exposing the hidden side of Asian values 184

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

- 52 Asean must wake up to explosive regional tensions 188
- 53 Firebrand religious factions pose security risk 192
- 54 Religion has little to do with unrest
in southern Philippines 196
- 55 Mutual suspicions, an obstacle to Asian unity 199
- 56 Strategic interests may quell storm
over US spy plane 203
- 57 Japan must play independent global role 207
- 58 Lame duck without an absolute mandate 211
- 59 Flawed election takes shine off US democracy 214
- 60 Liberal world trade is the hand that feeds us 217
- 61 Rivalry defeats Muslim unity 221
- 62 Attack on the US smear the good name of Islam 225
- 63 US actions forsake the plight
of Muslims worldwide 228
- 64 Don't allow the vocal few to upset the status quo 231
- 65 Muslims must unite behind diplomacy
and non-violence 234
- 66 Continued bombing of Afghanistan is indefensible 237
- 67 United regionalism can thwart
big-power interference 240
- 68 Democracy as the US fancies it 243
- 69 Islamic peacekeepers can prevent repeat
of Afghan civil war 246
- 70 Dr Mahathir's views a welcome voice for Islam 249
- 71 Despite history's catalogue of misery,
let's hope for better things 252
- 72 Economic security is more valuable
than democracy 255

Index 259