

20 JUN 2001

Focus: UMNO

UMNO THE GUARDIAN OF THE MALAY DOMINANCE

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KUALA LUMPUR: Besides the Malay Archipelago, people of Malay origin are also found in other parts of the globe, including Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, China and South Africa.

However, there is a big difference in term of religion and culture between the Malays living outside the archipelago and those in Malaysia because here, the Malay culture and traits are still very much intact either as an institution, or from the cultural, religious and traditional perspective.

This is so because the Malays in Malaysia are protected by the Federal Constitution and defended by Umno whose struggle includes the upholding of Malay dominance ("Ketuanan Melayu") in the country.

Clause 3 (5) of the Umno Constitution states that the party will ensure the sovereignty of the Malay language and culture. In other words, Malays are Umno and Umno is Malay.

DEFINITION OF KETUANAN

"Ketuanan" comes from the root word "tuan", which according to dictionaries means a master or lord, a pronoun, ownership or reference to someone of higher standing in the society. The four definitions convey a similar meaning of controlling, governing and sovereignty.

Thus, "Malay dominance" means "the right of controlling and governing by the Malays who are sovereign", encompassing the political, economic, knowledge, culture and religious aspects of the nation.

Malay dominance had its root in Temasek (old Singapore) back in the 15th century and later moving to Malacca which developed into an empire and became the centre of political, economic, knowledge and religious power in the East, commanding the respect of China and other superpowers in Europe.

Names such as Sultan Mansor Shah, Hang Tuah and Tun Perak are symbols of the Malay dominance of the era.

However, the Malay pride crumbled in 1511 following the fall of the Malacca Sultanate (the Malay dominance) at the hands of the Portugese, due to the disloyalty of the Malays to their rulers, disunity, betrayal and vengeance. Names such as Rajuna Tapa and gang, who conspired to open the Malacca gate to the invading Portuguese, shall never be forgotten by the Malays.

MALAYS CONTINUED TO BE COLONISED

Such was the fate of the Malays - colonised for 446 years by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British and the Japanese, so much so they generally became a weak and poor race.

The wealth of the Malay lands was dominated and exploited by the foreigners. Resources such as tin and rubber were shipped out and the returns were used to develop and enrich their own countries.

Infrastructures such as roads, electricity, water, schools, hospitals, community halls and phone booths were not provided, not to mention industrial premises.

The education of the Malay children were also neglected, and those fortunate enough to go to school were only taught how to read, write and count, not how to rule and administer.

The Malays were left to subsist with the "agro-economic" system based on the rivers, the seas, the padi fields and the orchards.

The poor socio-political and economic condition of the Malays prevailed until the country achieved its independence on August 31, 1957.

THE PILLARS OF MALAY DOMINANCE

Since the Greek civilisation or the Abbassid Caliphate, or even during the European industrial revolution, the strength of a civilisation and the resilience of a race came from politics, economy, knowledge, religion and culture. The strength of the Malay dominance too should be based on these five pillars.

POLITICS: The independence of the Malays from the colonial shackles was the product of their political strength. Unity and Malay political power which was initiated by Umno frightened the British.

The struggle for the independence of the Federation of Malaya which was spearheaded by Umno, together with the MCA and the MIC, forced the British to concede, and the strength and the political power of the Malays (Umno) remain until today, of course with its ups and downs.

The Malay political power under Umno's banner was very solid between 1959 and 1969. However, the result of the 1969 general election showed that the status quo was being threatened, resulting in the May 13 incident.

However, leaders such as the late Tun Razak were quick to mend the situation. He had successfully brought Umno and Pas under the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition. Malay political power then was at its peak. No one dared to disturb or challenge the Malay dominance and their rights.

ANOTHER THREAT TO MALAY UNITY

However, a misunderstanding ended with PAS being "ousted" from the BN coalition in 1978, putting the Malay power in jeopardy once again.

The situation deteriorated when Umno was declared illegal in 1987 and the emergence of "Umno Baru" (later formalised as Umno) under Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and "Umno Malaysia" (later renamed Parti Melayu Semangat 46) under Tengku Razalieggh Hamzah.

The Malays were then split into three political groups of Umno, Semangat 46 and PAS. However, things improved a little when Semangat 46 was dissolved and most of its members returned to Umno in 1996.

But it did not last very long. The Malay dominance and political strength were once again threatened when the country was hit with an economic crisis in mid-1997 and later, the more severe political crisis which erupted due to the Anwar factor.

The economic crisis had almost subsided, but the political crisis of the Malays seems unabated. Umno was at the receiving end by losing a substantial number of parliamentary and state assembly seats in the 1999 general election. Almost half of the Malay votes went to PAS.

The election results pointed to the obvious - that the pillars of the Malay dominance were cracking and in danger of collapsing.

NEED TO EMPOWER UMNO

Hence, Umno members and leaders should resolve to serve with honesty, sincerity and trust, all united with the aim of defending Malay dominance.

Those who sympathise with Umno should come forward and fight boldly under the Umno flag, while the youths who are still searching for political direction should be encouraged and nurtured so that they are with Umno.

ECONOMY: During the pre-Merdeka days, Malays owned less than five

percent of the wealth and economic resources of the nation.

Even though the New Economic Policy and the current National Development Policy have succeeded in increasing the Malays' economic power to 20 percent now, it is still not acceptable. (See Appendix I).

The Malay economic position is still not guaranteed. Firstly, it should be remembered that the government took 43 years to raise it to the present level, and secondly, the 20 percent stake is not owned by individual Malays and Malay companies.

If the share of PNB, LUTH, PKEN and other government agencies are excluded, Malay ownership is less than 10 percent.

Thirdly, the current economic system is exposed to economic globalisation. Globalisation and the world economic order which are controlled by the developed countries are always a threat to the Malaysian economy.

MALAYS TALK TOO MUCH

The Malays are also seen as talking too much. The so-called "overnight" millionaires are still weak, succumbing easily to economic vagaries, just like rice crusts that soften easily in water.

That's why the Malays should build up economic activities or businesses that are long-term, avoiding riches created by Alladin's lamp. Or they could operate in groups, organisations or consortiums.

The bigger the organisation, the bigger the bargaining power. It would decide the pattern of the Malays' economy.

KNOWLEDGE: Even though the Malays became Muslims about 600 years ago, the Islam they embraced was not made the basis from which to progress and acquire knowledge.

Islam is not wrong. The Malays were also not 100 percent wrong. The environment, mental colonisation by the colonialists and the colonial policy of nearly five centuries are the main factors for making Malays poor in knowledge and expertise.

This can be seen in the few schools or centres of education in the early days of independence.

Another big contribution of Umno to the Malays is the successful creation of many Malays with higher education through the construction of schools, colleges and universities throughout the country.

Through the national education policy which Umno fought for, many Malay children now have diplomas and degrees in various fields like medicine, engineering, architecture, accountancy and law.

MALAYS STILL BACKWARD

Despite all that, the Malays are still left behind when compared with the other races.

They still have not acquired control over all fields of knowledge and expertise, their numbers in science and technology is small, while the number of Malays with excellent examination results or those with first class honours were very small compared to the Chinese and Indians.

In 1999, third class Malay graduates in Universiti Malaya was 94 percent compared with six percent among Indian graduates, while there was not a single third class Chinese graduate.

In contrast, 49 percent Chinese graduates obtained first class honours, Malays 45 percent and Indians, six percent. This is the position of Malay students.

Meanwhile, latest statistics show the total number of Malays working as accountants, archit

Attention: Feature Editors

The following tables are to go with the Focus "UMNO THE GUARDIAN OF THE MALAY DOMINANCE" written by Mohamad Nor Ali and released by Bernama today (June 18, 2001. It is EMBARGOED for use on Wednesday, June 20, 2001.

(Table I)

SHARE CAPITAL RIGHTS (AT PAR VALUE)
LIMITED COMPANIES 1995

Rights Group	1995 (RM Million)	Percentage
BUMIPUTRA	36,981.2	20.6
Bumiputra Individual & Institutions	33,353.2	18.6
Trust Agencies	3,628.0	2.0
NON-BUMIPUTRA	78,026.9	43.4
Chinese	73,552.7	40.9
Indian	2,723.1	1.5
Others	1,751.1	1.0
Foreigners	49,792.7	27.7
NOMINEE COs.	14,991.4	8.3
TOTAL	179,792.2	100

(Table II)

REGISTERED PROFESSIONALS ACCORDING
TO ETHNIC GROUPS 1995

PROFESSION	1995				
	Bumiputra	Chinese	Indian	Others	Total
Accountant	1,422	6,665	692	75	8,844
%	16.1	75.2	7.9	0.8	100.0
Architect	368	943	20	3	1,334
%	27.6	70.7	1.5	0.2	100.0

Doctor	3,212	3,086	3,069	241	9,609
%	33.4	32.1	32.0	2.5	100.00
Dentist	577	854	409	29	1,869
%	30.9	45.7	21.9	1.5	100.0
Veterinarian	310	183	259	20	772
%	40.2	23.7	33.5	2.6	100.0
Engineers	10,415	15,091	1,416	427	27,349
%	38.1	55.2	5.2	1.5	100.0
Surveyors	1,309	1,235	86	79	2,709
%	48.3	45.6	3.2	2.9	100.0
Lawyers	1,731	2,589	1,591	65	5,976
%	29.0	43.3	26.6	1.1	100.0
TOTAL	19,344	30,636	7,542	939	54,461
%	33.1	52.4	12.9	1.6	100.00

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