

**UMNO : A CHRONOLOGY OF
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS
(1988)**

VOLUME 1

ECONOMIC RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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UMNO : A CHRONOLOGY OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

2ND FEBRUARY 1988 - 14TH MAY 1989

In the events that have marked the political history of Malaysia since 1945, the declaration by the High Court on February 1988 that UMNO was an illegal organisation triggered a series of developments that have been both significant and to some extent politically destabilising. This declaration by the High Court will certainly be viewed as a major event affecting the course and shape of the evolution of the Malaysian political process. While it is too early to predict the exact impact that this event has had or will have on the course of Malaysia's political history, it is too important to be left unstudied or unchronicled until subsequent academic analysis and study.

The primary purpose of this study is to provide a documentation in chronological order of all political developments relating to UMNO from the date of the High Court declaration that UMNO was an illegal organisation, i.e 2nd February 1988 to 11th May 1989, when UMNO celebrated its 43rd anniversary since its founding. It is hoped that this chronology will provide a basis for interested scholars and analysts to study and analyse the impact and significance arising from the developments generated by the High Court declaration on UMNO's status on 4th February 1988. The chronology has been extracted from the major news sources.

JUNE, 1989.

EDITOR
ECONOMIC RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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2/2/88 (NST - 3/2/88)

Lawyer, Raja Addruse said that the attitude of UMNO Secretary-general Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid in not taking steps to deal with complaints brought before him gave party members the right to come to court.

Raja Aziz, counsel for the 11 plaintiffs, was replying to submissions raised last week by Mr. G.Sri Ram, counsel for Datuk Seri Sanusi and four other defendants, on "issues to be tried" at the hearing of the action brought by the UMNO members.

The 11, who filed their action on June 25 last year, named as defendants Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and the secretaries of six UMNO divisions - Jelutong and Nibong Tebal (in Penang); Pasir Puteh, Machang and Rantau Panjang (in Kelantan); and Pekan (Pahang).

Apart from asking that the general assembly be declared null and void, they are also seeking to declare the divisional delegates' meetings for election of delegates to the general assembly, unconstitutional and ultra vires the party constitution.

3/2/88 (NST, 4/2/88)

The High Court was told today that giving relief sought by 11 UMNO members challenging the validity of the party's last April 24th general assembly and election would "strike down the act of wrong-doers" in establishing branches without the approval of the Registrar of Societies.

Their lawyer, Raja Addruse, said if the court were to dismiss their action and did nothing more, it would virtually be approving the existence of unapproved branches.

Alternatively, he said, if the court looked upon UMNO as an unlawful society and on that ground, declared that they (the plaintiffs) were not entitled to succeed because UMNO is an unlawful society.

4/2/88 (NST, 5/2/88)

The High Court had ruled today that UMNO was an unlawful society because of the existence of the 30 illegal branches. At the same time, the

court dismissed the claim by the 11 to have the court declare last year's party general assembly null and void.

The judge had refused the reliefs sought by the 11 and declared that UMNO was an unlawful society when its 38th general assembly and election took place last April 24th.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Dato' Harun M.Hashim had said: "Very sadly, I have to make a finding in law that, at the material time, UMNO was an unlawful society."

He said he did not have to declare the assembly and the election null and void because "it was a nullity all the way".

"What happened in 1987 is a nullity. Therefore, the claim by the plaintiffs is dismissed," he had said when delivering an oral judgment.

One of the questions raised during the hearing was what is the effect in law of branches in UMNO having been established without the approval of the Registrar of Societies contrary to Section 12 of the Societies Act 1966.

In his decision, Mr. Justice Harun said when a society established a branch without the approval of the Registrar, not only was the branch deemed to be unlawful but also the parent society.

He said the law was clear. "If the facts show that UMNO has established branches without the approval of the Registrar, it seems to me that UMNO itself is an unlawful society."

The 11 sued former UMNO Secretary-general Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and the secretaries of six former UMNO divisions - Jelutong and Nibong Tebal (in Penang), Pasir Putih, Machang and Rantau Panjang (in Kelantan) and Pekan (Pahang).

They also asked for an order compelling UMNO and Datuk Seri Sanusi to make arrangements for a fresh delegates' elections and a fresh UMNO general assembly and election to be held after that.

The plaintiffs, among other things, claimed that 30 unregistered branches had sent delegates to the divisional elections and that the elections of the divisional delegates to the assembly was invalid.