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# DEMOCRACY AT WORK *in Malaysia*



**EDITORS**

**MOHD AZIZUDDIN MOHD SANI  
UMMU ATIYAH AHMAD ZAKUAN**

05



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*Special for Tun Mahathir*

*[Signature]*  
16/3/2019





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## Preface

The future of Malaysia as a nation is determined by the leaders chosen by the people through election. As a democratic state, election gives the opportunity and right to the eligible citizens of Malaysia to vote their representatives in forming the government. Malaysia has held thirteen general elections so far and the GE13 in 2013 is the most interesting and is considered as the mother of all elections because of its intensity, closely contested between two coalition parties namely Barisan Nasional (BN) and Pakatan Rakyat (PR). BN is an incumbent and formal coalition, and PR is a loose and unregistered coalition between three opposition parties – Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) and Democratic Action Party (DAP). Events which led to the 13<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE13) since the 12<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE12) in 2008 in particular the resignation of Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who is replaced by Najib Tun Razak, and series of BERSIH demonstration as well as by-elections make this election as being awaited by many especially local citizens and observers abroad. Therefore, researches on the GE13 are crucial to understand the outcome and overall phenomenon of this election in order for the result to be understood analytically and clearly for further researches to be made.

In this spirit of understanding the dynamic of this election, the School of International Studies (SOIS), Universiti Utara Malaysia has embarked on a book project by inviting Malaysia's political scientists to contribute their thoughts on the GE13. Finally, we are able to put together thirteen top articles by forming them as chapters in this book. First and foremost, we would like to thank our university, Universiti Utara Malaysia, which is a great institution that always inspires and encourages us to conduct such an important project. We would also like to express our gratitude to the publisher, Universiti Utara Malaysia Press (UUM

Press), for making all valuable articles accessible into a book and publishing it.

We would like to thank the following writers for their contributions in this book; Jayum Jawan, Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, Che Hamdan Che Mohd Razali, Abdul Rashid Moten, Sarjit Singh Gill, Ahmad Tarmizi Talib, Asmady Idris, Azahar Kasim, Noor Sulastry Yurni Ahmad, Abdul Qayyum Jumadi, Aldila Isahak, Mohd Razali Harun, Neven Bondokji, Rosyidah Muhammad, Zaireeni Azmi, Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid, and Arzura Idris. We are indeed indebted to your contributions. This book is useful to the readers who are interested in the GE13. It definitely will provide a good coverage of various issues in the election, ranging from manifesto, voters, media, women and ethnic politics. This is also a significant contribution academically and beneficial for politicians, journalist, researchers, academics, students of politics and the public who are interested to understand the phenomenon of the GE13. It has been a privilege and an honour for us to contribute in a form of this book for this crucial historic event in Malaysia. Love especially to our nation has turned this publication from a dream into a reality.

*Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani*  
*Ummu Atiyah Ahmad Zakuan*  
2017

## Abbreviations

AFP	Agence France–Presse
ABIM	Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia
ALIRAN	Aliran Kesedaran Negara
Aps	Approve Permits
AS1M	Amanah Sham 1Malaysia
AST	Agenda-Setting Theory
BA	Barisan Alternative
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BERJASA	Barisan Jemaah Islamiah Se-Malaysia
BERJAYA	Parti Bersatu Rakyat Jelata Sabah
BERSAMA	Parti Bersatu Sasa Malaysia
BERSIH	Coalition for Clean and Fair Election
BH Online	Berita Harian Online
BN	Barisan Nasional
BR1M	Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia
CAN	Candidacies Won
CIJ	Centre for Independent
COMANGO	Coalition of Malaysian NGOs
CPPS	Centre for Public Policy Studies
DAP	Democratic Action Party
DDOS	Distributed Denial Of Service
EC	Election Commission
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
ESSCOM	East Sabah Security Command
ETP	Economic Transformation Program
FELDA	Lembaga Kemajuan Tanah Persekutuan
FT	Federal Territory



GE 11	11th General Election
GE 12	12th General Election
GE 13	13th General Election
GE 14	14th General Election
GE 10	10th General Election
GERAKAN	Malaysian People's Movement Party
HAKAM	Pertubuhan Hak Asasi Manusia
HINDRAF	Hindu Action Rights Force
HM	Hizbul Muslimin
HRW	Human Rights Watch
HT	Hizb at-Tahrir: Party of Liberation
HTM	Hizb at-Tahrir Malaysia
IC	Identity Card
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDEAS	Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs
IKIN	Ikatan Intelletual Nusantara
INDP	Independent
IPP	Independent Power Producers
IPPs	Independent Power Producers
IRC	Islamic Representative Council
IRF	Islamic Renaissance Front
IS	Islamic State
ISA	Internal Security Acts
ISMA	Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia
IT	Information Technology
JIM	Jamaah Islah Malaysia
Keadilan	Parti Keadilan Nasional
KITA	Homeland Human's Wellbeing Party
KKIP	Kota Kinabalu Industrial Park
KPI	Key performance indicators
KR1M	Kedai Rakyat 1 Malaysia

LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association
MCMC	Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
MDA	Malaysian Digital Association
MIC	Malaysian Indian Congress
MNP	Malay Nationalist Party
MP	Member of Parliament
MSC	Multimedia Super Corridor
NEP	New Economic Policy
NFC	National Feedlots Corporation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NKEA	National Key Economic Areas
NKRA	National Key Result Area
NKRAs	National Key Result Areas
NST	New Straits Times
NSTP	National Service Training Program
NTV	Natseven TV Sdn Bhd
OSA	Official Secrets Act
PACOS trust	Partners of Community Organisation
PAS	Parti Islam Se-Malaysia
PBB	Parti Persaka Bumiputera Bersatu Sarawak
PBRs	Parti Bersat Rakyat Sabah
PBS	Parti Bersatu Sabah
PCM	Parti Cinta Malaysia
PDS	Parti Demokrat Sabah
PETA	Pembela Tanahair
PKFZ	Port Klang Free Zone

PKR	Parti Keadilan Rakyat
PM	Prime Minister
PMIP	Pan-Malayan Islamic Party
POIC	Palm Oil Industrial Cluster
PPP	People Progressive Party
PPPA	Printing Presses and Publication Act
PR	Pakatan Rakyat
PR1MA	Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia
PRM	Parti Rakyat Malaysia
PRS	Private Retirement Scheme
PSM	Parti Sosialis Malaysia
PTPTN	Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional
PUM	Persatuan Ulama Malaysia
RSS	Rich Site Summary
SAMUR	Sabah Ammonia Urea
SAPP	Sabah Progressive Party
SCA	Sabah Chinese Association
SEAPA	Southeast Asian Press Alliance
SIS	Sister In Islam
SLA	State Legislative Assembly
SMS	Short Message Service
SNS	Social Networking Site
SOGT	Sabah Oil and Gas Terminal
SPDP	Sarawak People's Democratic Party
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
STAR	State Reform Party
SUARAM	Suara Rakyat Malaysia
SUHAKAM	Malaysian Human Rights Commission
SUPP	Sarawak United People's Party
SW1M	Suara Wanita 1Malaysia

SWP	Sarawak Worker's Party
UMNO	United Malays National Organization
UN	United Nations
UNKO	United National Kadazan Organisation
UPKO	United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation
US	United States of America
USNO	United Sabah National Organisation
WWC	Won Without Contest





# Introduction

*Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani  
Ummu Atiyah Ahmad Zakuan*

Politics in Malaysia for long was based on racial arithmetic. However, since 1999, there has been a gradual change in the political culture of the country. The salience of ethnicity has been dampened and the country has been practicing what is termed ‘new politics’ in Malaysia. The GE13 in Malaysia exhibited all the features of this new politics. It was characterized by two-party coalition, a record voter turnout, extensive role played by the social media, and campaigning for votes on the basis of issues with broad national rather than ethnic appeal. The election results showed the ruling coalition winning majority of the seats while the opposition coalition performed much better than in an earlier election but could not fulfill its desire to capture the administrative capital, Putrajaya.

With the advent of new media, it has been working with traditional forms of media to take civil awareness into a new level of appreciation. However, the connection between the two may not always be rooted in positivity. The understanding of the media is controlled, whether it is by conglomerates or the government and this could play a major role in determining how information technology is employed to the benefit or bane of civil awareness.

The light of the current circumstances in Malaysia, the media particularly the print and broadcasting media has become a strong mediator between the ruler and the ruled. Besides, the impact of social media comparatively in two general elections namely the GE12 in 2008 and GE13 in 2013 was massive. Based on empirical data and observation, it is clear that social media

# DEMOCRACY AT WORK

## *in Malaysia*

The prediction is that the 14<sup>th</sup> General Election (14thGE) is coming earlier than when it should be, as early as March 2017, instead of May 2018. On the one hand, with the DAP-led opposition in disarray for the last 18 months, since the departure of PAS, and on the other, the UMNO-led BN becoming more resolved and combative, the events leading to the forthcoming election promises more fireworks. The complexity of facts, fictions, perceptions and perspectives in making sense of the forthcoming 14thGE are intricate.

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"The present book, *Democracy at Work*, edited by Prof. Azizuddin and Dr. Ummu Atiyah of Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), provides an essential critical backdrop to build an informed understanding of what to expect from the 14thGE based on the 13 chapters of the book on the highly confusing but sometimes entertaining 13thGE. An added bonus is that the chapters are written not by the usual crop of opinionated 'tired' scholars but largely a fresh crop of serious and bright ones. The book is a must read for Malaysianists who enjoy talking, studying and making opinions on the ever complicated Malaysian politics, beyond the ambit of the *mamak* shops."

*Shamsul A.B.,  
Distinguished Professor and Founding Director, Institute of Ethnic Studies, (KITA),  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*

"A very essential book for those concerned with whether or not democracy is at work in Malaysia. It is indeed working. This major work explores some interesting issues dominated the public sphere during the GE13. Therefore, this book should be read by anyone interested about Malaysian politics and democracy."

*Sivamurugan Pandian  
Professor at the School of Social Sciences,  
Universiti Sains Malaysia*



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