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Malaysia's 2018 election (GE14) brought down a ruling party in power since independence in 1957. This book tells the full story of this historic election, combining a sharp analysis of the voting data with consideration of the key issues, campaign strategies, and mobilization efforts that played out during the election period in April and May 2018. This analysis is then used to bring fresh perspectives to bear on the core debates about Malaysian political ideas, identities and behaviours, debates that continue to shape the country's destiny. However optimistic many Malaysians may be for the possibility of a more representative, accountable, participatory, and equitable polity, the authors do not see GE14 as a clear harbinger of full-on liberalization in Malaysia. While the political aftermath of the election continues to play out, the authors provide a clarion call for deeper, more critical, more comparative research on Malaysia's politics. They complicate well-known angles on and elevate too-little-studied dimensions of Malaysian politics, and suggest agendas for empirically interesting, theoretically relevant further research. They also point to the broader insights Malaysia's experience provides for the study of elections and political change in one-party dominant states around the world. This research offers critical insight

on the concept of free and fair elections and its implementation under the constitutional framework in Malaysia. The study is aimed at analyzing whether the existing constitutional framework has provided enough support on the conduct of free and fair elections. The term 'free and fair elections' is used to describe the standards of election, which are mainly based on international obligations and general democratic principles. The term refers to the principle that supports the fundamental purpose of the election itself. This research explores the concept of free and fair elections based on a mixed academic and applied law research whereby conventional method is used along with historical and evaluative techniques. In this context the quality of elections in Malaysia is measured through assessment on the relevant constitutional provisions. Every element of election in the constitution is examined based on the concept of free and fair election. The findings reveal that, the framers of the Constitution had strongly recommended a reliable system but it has been weakened by the changes proposed by the Working Committee and the amendments afterwards. The result of this thesis also shows that the existing electoral process is partially free and fair. The facts that the political freedoms are curtailed, the restrictions on political critics and the failure to ratify international instruments are among the basis of the finding that the election is partially free. The conclusion that the Malaysia election is not completely fair is based on the many indicators such as: degree of neutrality the Election Commission; lack of caretaker government policy; unfair media access; and unfair delimitation. The study proposes a genuine electoral reform which should start with administrative reform. This research also strongly argues on the importance of fair competition, transparency, accountability and control on political party financing. The result obtained may assist in providing academic perspective for electoral reform. More importantly, it would be very helpful for more detailed research of essential areas on elections in order to improve the electoral process in Malaysia. After the watershed 2008 election when the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition lost its customary two-thirds control of parliamentary seats, there was the not unreasonable expectation that BN would slip even further in the much-anticipated Thirteenth General Election of 2013, which is the subject of this book. In the event, the BN lost the popular vote to the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) but still retained the reins of government. In this book, prominent Malaysian specialists and experts will provide the reader with fresh insights into the evolving character of electoral politics by delving into its failing model of "consociationalism", the extent of malapportionment in the electoral system and its effects on outcomes, how "new politics" continue to meet the resistance of old modes of political behaviour, the path-dependence analysis of twin-coalition politics, the significance of the FELDA vote bank, the issues animating electoral politics in Sabah, Sarawak, Terengganu and Johor, why the PR continues to command urban support, the role of the biased mainstream media, and details of the campaign strategies of both coalitions. In this new study of Malaysia's electoral politics, it is evident that the ruling coalition has lost its first-mover advantage and is only able to hold on to power due to the first-past-the-post (FPTP) single member plurality electoral system. This sort of system has given rise, in the parlance of electoral studies, to "manufactured majorities", that is, electoral outcomes that confer a majority of seats (simple or large) to a single party or a coalition of parties without commanding a majority of the popular vote. Malaysia's FPTP system, imbued as it is with a generous proportion of "rural weightage", continues to favour the BN, oftentimes generating large manufactured parliamentary majorities. While some may argue that electoral politics have reached an impasse, after two general elections, Malaysia's twin-coalition system seems to have gained some traction and, thanks to its federalism, with the PR having considerable control of state governments in the Malay heartland and of the more urbanized states of Selangor and Penang. The 2018 Malaysian General Election will stand as a major defining event in Malaysian history, when the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition unexpectedly lost power in the country they had ruled for over half a century. This volume brings together scholars who assess one fundamental factor that brought about this game-changing event in Malaysian politics: intra-elite feuding in the leading Malay-based political parties. This study provides an analysis of individual state politics as well as national trends shaped by the actions of leaders in government and the opposition. An indispensable guide for scholars studying the politics of Malaysia and of Southeast Asia more broadly, it will be of great interest for all readers with an interest in Malaysian politics. This study was carried out in Johor and Kedah through a combination of focus groups, formal and informal interviews and long-term ethnographic participant observation. Johor was selected for this study because it is the birthplace and long-time bastion of UMNO while Kedah was of interest because of the Mahathir family legacy in the state. The study shows that the rural vote is not homogeneous; views and perceptions that could lead to electoral action differs between regions, ages and genders. Daily survival and rising costs of living are the key common issues that were raised across all regions. The importance of Malay rights and the priority of Islam are also important to the rural voter. Another common problem mentioned is that of the middleman who prevents allocated funds or financial assistance from reaching the average rural resident. Malay cultural norms, traditional obligations of loyalty and patronage politics are major factors that affect the decisions of older rural voters. Younger voters might be open to the idea of a new government, but they need to overcome community and family pressure to break away from generational practices of voting for Barisan Nasional. Some rural voters feel that they gain no benefits from having either side of the political divide in power. While these voters generally do not see the point of voting, a last-minute decision to vote may go the way of the party that provides them with immediate gains. Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone held from 26 to 27 February 1996. The group was chaired by SK Singh and comprised 12 eminent persons in total. The group found that the elections were conducted in a manner that provided the vast majority of the people of Sierra Leone with the opportunity to express their will through the ballot. Johor is a key battleground in Malaysia's 14th General Elections. The state is economically vital to the country: it is the birthplace of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO); and it has a large number of parliamentary seats. Johor-specific dynamics that have worked to the advantage of the ruling coalition include: UMNO's unique links with the state; the tight control over religion; and the phenomenal scale and success of the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) scheme. Despite these advantages, support for the ruling coalition has been slipping across the state. Furthermore, the emergence of new parties such as Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) will challenge Barisan Nasional's control over Johor's rural and Malay heartland. The redelineation of parliamentary and state constituencies now underway is however likely to benefit BN, and recent survey data indicate that Johoreans are yet to be attracted to the reconfigured opposition coalition, Pakatan Harapan. Thus, while BN may suffer a drop in support, it is likely to retain power in Johor. In recent social research, ethnicity has mostly been used as an explanatory variable. It was only after it was agreed that ethnicity, in itself, is subject to change, were the questions of how and why it changes, possible to answer. This multiplicity of ethnic identities requires that we think of each society as one with multiple ethnic dimensions, of which any can become activated in the process of political competition - and sometimes several of them within a short period of time. Focusing on Malaysia and Indonesia, this book traces the variations of ethnic identity by looking at electoral strategies in two sub-national units. It shows that ethnic identities are subject to change - induced by calculated moves by political entrepreneurs who use identities as tools to maximize their chances of winning elections or expanding support base - and highlights how political institutions play an enormous role in shaping the modes and dynamics of these ethno-political manipulations. The book suggests that in societies where ethnic identities are activated in politics, instead of analysing politics with ethnic distribution as an independent variable, ethnic distribution can be taken as the dependent variable, with political institutions being the explanatory one. It examines the problems of voters' behaviour, and parties' and candidates' strategy in a polity that is, to a significant extent, driven by ethnic relations. Pushing the boundaries of qualitative research on Southeast Asian politics by placing formal institutions at the centre of its analysis, this book will be of interest to students and scholars of Southeast Asian Politics, Race and Ethnic Studies, and International Relations. ..." a useful volume on the impact of electoral laws...includes a very good bibliography and index...establishes a broader international and interdisciplinary perspective on the methods of representation." - American Political Science Review

Malaysia pulled itself back from the brink on 9 May 2018. That day the majority of its voting population decided to topple the Barisan Nasional government that had been in power for over 60 years and that had come to be seen as corrupt beyond redemption, and incompetent to boot. Lined up against the unpopular administration of Najib Razak was a coalition led by former strongman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who at the age of 92 had decided to return to Malaysian politics to stop the rot which many believed had begun during his earlier period in power, in 1981-2003. As the oldest prime minister in world history, he is now setting about creating structure that he believes will lead to a Malaysia that will achieve the Vision 2020 that he first propounded in 1991. This vision dovetails with the ideals of the highly influential Reformasi Movement which was ignited by the sacking of

his deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, in 1998. This compilation of insightful analyses is Ooi Kee Beng's seventh, and discusses key events from the last five years leading up to 9 May 2018 and beyond. These seven books together cover the strange period we may come to know as the Inter-Mahathir Era, and the present volume discusses some of the challenges facing the new government, and the Malaysian population in general, now that the Barisan Nasional has imploded. This book argues that Malaysia's electoral politics have historically been premised on a hybridized model of communalism and consociationalism. Beyond this it posits a newer idea of power sharing based on the dynamic and transformative practice of mediated communalism through six decades (1952–2016) of electoral politics. The strategy of mediating communalism is critically explored throughout the book, serving to test its saliency as a distinct approach to power sharing in a social formation which is ethnically, religiously and regionally divided, yet has remained remarkably and tenuously integrated throughout Malaysia's electoral history. The book delves into this question by narrating and theorizing the complexity of communal politics leading to the emergence of new politics which have attempted to put Malaysia on the track of further democratization. It is further implied that new politics has to work in tandem with mediated communalism to transcend the most deleterious effects of an ethnically divided society. The results of Malaysia's 14th General Elections of May 2018 were unexpected and transformative. Against conventional wisdom, the newly reconfigured opposition grouping Pakatan Harapan (PH) decisively defeated the incumbent Barisan Nasional (BN), ending six decades of uninterrupted dominant one-party rule. Despite a long-running financial scandal dogging the ruling coalition, pollsters and commentators predicted a solid BN victory or, at least, a narrow parliamentary majority. Yet, on the day, deeply rooted political dynamics and influential actors came together, sweeping aside many prevailing assumptions and reconfiguring the country's political reality in the process. In order to understand the elections and their implications, this edited volume brings together contributions from ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute researchers and a group of selected collaborators to examine the elections from three angles: campaign dynamics; important trends among major interest groups; and local-level dynamics and developments in key states. This analytical work is complemented by personal narratives from a selection of GE-14 participants. Sabah's 2020 election was Malaysia's pandemic election. While attention has centred on the impact the election had on the increase of COVID-19, this collection brings together scholars, journalists and social scientists who were on the ground on Sabah to analyse what happened, why, and the broader implications of the outcome for Sabah and Malaysian politics. The book is the first in-depth study of a Sabah election. It is multidisciplinary, with authors from different perspectives, and the majority of the authors are from Sabah. Traditional explanations prioritize the federal-state relationship in shaping Sabah politics. This collection challenges this paradigm, suggesting that politics in Sabah should be better understood as a reflection of conditions within Sabah—as Sabahans struggle to navigate and survive on Malaysia's periphery. The 2018 Malaysian General Election will stand as a major defining event in Malaysian history, when the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition unexpectedly lost power in the country they had ruled for over half a century. This volume brings together scholars who assess one fundamental factor that brought about this game-changing event in Malaysian politics: intra-elite feuding in the leading Malay-based political parties. This study provides an analysis of individual state politics as well as national trends shaped by the actions of leaders in government and the opposition. An indispensable guide for scholars studying the politics of Malaysia and of Southeast Asia more broadly, it will be of great interest for all readers with an interest in Malaysian politics. The unprecedented results of the 2008 national elections took many Malaysians by surprise. The component parties of the ruling coalition suffered huge losses, while the opposition was victorious in several states. Many media scholars and political pundits, including politicians, pointed to the online platform as a democratic tool that had increased support for the opposition. In the 2013 election the ruling party turned its spotlight on new media to try to regain voter support. In order to obtain a better understanding of the much-touted democratizing effects of the online media, this book employs an alternative lens to examine the use of new media at the intersection of social and political realities. It explores the ways individual political bloggers, Facebookers and Twitterers used cyberspace to battle for voter support in the 2008 and 2013 national elections. It examines the cultural practices and the social and political affiliation and aims of individual actors, as well as the social ties that subsequently emerged from the use of the online media. This research employs a political economy approach to the media, Habermas's notion of the public sphere, and the social determinism perspective in order to understand the extent to which online media can enrich political life and bring about new ways of campaigning. Beginning in 2005 as a small electoral reform initiative, the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections, known as Bersih, became the most prominent social movement in Malaysia. Based on participant observation approach and first-hand interviews with key actors, this book examines how Bersih became a movement that aggregated the collective grievance of Malaysians and brought Malaysian sociopolitical activism to a new level. This book makes a major contribution to the scholarly work on social movement theories in the Southeast Asian context and to the growing literature on social movements and democratization. An analysis of the 1999 Indonesian general election and subsequent presidential election in the context of Indonesian elections and politics. The book highlights major characteristics of Indonesian society and culture which affect electoral behaviour, namely ethnicity, regionalism and religion. In Malaysia's last general election, urban voters tended to support the opposition coalition — 72 of the 97 urban parliamentary seats were in fact won by it. However, most of these seats have a mixed demography, with a high percentage of ethnic Chinese voters. In the upcoming general election, Pakatan has a good chance of winning the federal government if Malay voters join their Chinese counterparts in supporting the opposition coalition. A subsequent so-called "Malay tsunami" could lead to a Pakatan victory. This present study, which is based on a series of focus group discussions held in the Malaysian states of Kedah and Johor, finds that urban Malay voters are very unhappy with the economic condition of the country and are also worried about corruption. But despite their grouses, they are still uncertain about supporting the opposition coalition due to the fear of losing the race-based privileges they enjoy as ethnic Malays. Bringing together a group of both international and Malaysian scholars, this book offers an up-to-date and broad analysis of the contemporary state of Malaysian politics and society. Transcending disciplinary boundaries, it offers a look at Malaysian politics not only through the lens of political science but also anthropology, cultural studies, international relations, political economy and legal studies touching on both overlooked topics in Malaysian political life as well as the emerging trends which will shape Malaysia's future. Covering silat martial arts, Malaysia's constitutional identity, emergency legislation, the South China Sea dilemma, ISIS discourse, zakat payment, the fallout from the 1MDB scandal and Malaysia's green movement, *Illusions of Democracy* charts the complex and multi-faceted nature of political life in a semi-authoritarian state, breaking down the illusions which keep it functioning, to uncover the mechanisms which really underlie the paradoxical longevity of Malaysia's political, economic and social system. "Malaysia's 13th general election, held 5 May 2013, saw an unprecedentedly close race between the incumbent Barisan Nasional (National Front, BN) and Pakatan Rakyat (People's Alliance, Pakatan) coalitions. For the first time in Malaysian history, a challenger coalition not only kept the BN from regaining the two-thirds parliamentary super-majority it had lost in the previous election, in 2008, but eked out a slim majority of the popular vote. While any Malaysian election is a big event, this one in particular merits close scrutiny. The present volume offers evidence and analysis with which to probe both the merits of common interpretations of who voted how, and why, and to suggest new readings of Malaysian electoral politics." --Front cover flap. The Malaysian political system incorporates a mix of democratic and authoritarian characteristics. In this comprehensive account, Harold Crouch argues that, while they may appear contradictory, the responsive and the repressive features of the system combine in an integrated and coherent whole. Consistently dominated by the Malay party UMNO, which represents the largest ethnic group, the Malaysian government requires the support of its Chinese, Indian, and East Malaysian minorities to retain control. The need to appeal to a politically and ethnically divided electorate restrains the arbitrary exercise of power by the ruling coalition. As a result, the government responds to popular aspirations, particularly since a split in the dominant Malay party in the 1980s. Yet it also controls the electoral process, ensuring victory in all national elections. Communal, social, and economic factors have all contributed in rather ambiguous ways to shaping the Malaysian political system. Communal tensions, change in the class structure, and the consequences of economic growth have generated pressures in both democratic and authoritarian directions. The government has been remarkably stable despite sharp ethnic divisions and, Crouch suggests, it is unlikely to move swiftly toward full democracy in the near future. Prominent scholars analyze how the dominant political parties in Malaysia and Singapore, United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and the People's Action Party (PAP), have stayed in power. With a focus on developments in the last decade and the

tenures of prime ministers, the authors offer explanations for how these regimes remained resilient. These Election Reports are the observations, conclusions and recommendations of Commonwealth Observer Groups. The SecretaryGeneral constitutes these observer missions at the request of governments and with the agreement of all significant political parties. At the end of a mission, a report is submitted to the SecretaryGeneral, who makes it available to the government of the country in question, the political parties concerned and to all Commonwealth governments. The report eventually becomes a public document.

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