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INTRODUCTION

Breaking Malay–Muslim hegemony – patronage, factionalism and feuds in the 14th Malaysian general election

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New alliances and UMNO’s fall

Following the historic 14th Malaysian General Election (GE14), the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the hegemonic party in the ruling multi-party coalition, the Barisan Nasional (BN, or National Front),1 unexpectedly lost power.2 For the first time since Malaysia gained its independence in 1957, the country was to be governed by a coalition that would not include UMNO. Until the GE14 in May 2018, UMNO had been the longest serving single dominant party in the world. Until the fall of the BN, Malaysia was one of only two countries in industrialised Southeast Asia that had not been subjected to a change of regime and the institutionalisation of democratic norms in the political system.

Scholars have argued that Malaysia is a classic case of a country that fits the modernisation theory. This theory contends that when economic growth appreciably increases the size of the middle class in an authoritarian state, a vibrant civil society will emerge that will actively participate in bringing about political change, leading to the consolidation of democracy (Slater, 2018). A variety of other perspectives have been proffered for UMNO’s fall. This includes the significant role played by political elites who, though no longer in government, still command respect and credibility with the masses (W. J. Abdullah, 2019; Ufen, 2020); the protest votes of Malay voters (Rahman, 2019); effective coalition building (Rahim, 2018); the part played by social media (Welsh, 2019); the BN’s failure to win over young voters (Welsh, 2019); the role of foreign actors (Malhi, 2019); and the swing in votes in the two Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak.3 Other analysts of the GE14 have interpreted the results it terms of what this means for facets of the political system such as the practice of patronage,4 women representation in politics (Yeong, 2019), the way the Indians voted (Kananatu, 2019) and Islamism in Malaysian politics (Hamid, 2019).

We have, in a recent edited book, argued that intra-Malay elite feuding was a crucial factor that led to UMNO’s fall in the GE14 (Gomez & Osman, 2019). The primary aim of this book was to examine the implications of serious feuding in Malaysia’s leading Malay-based political parties, UMNO and Parti Islam se-Malaysia (PAS). These intra-party feuds led to the emergence of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu), an UMNO breakaway, while numerous prominent PAS leaders incorporated a splinter
organisation, *Parti Amanah Nasional* (Amanah). Major political shifts subsequently occurred. Most notably – and much to the surprise of UMNO, in particular, and Malaysians, in general – opposition parties created an alliance led by a former prime minister and ex-president of UMNO, Mahathir Mohamad.\(^5\) Mahathir had served as president of UMNO and prime minister from 1981 till 2003, a period during which he was reputed to have entrenched authoritarian rule in Malaysia (Teik, 1995), deeply undermining the very same political parties he now sought to work with to bring down the BN. Other prominent ex-UMNO leaders now in the opposition included two former deputy prime ministers, Anwar Ibrahim and Muhyiddin Yassin. Well-known ex-PAS leaders also emerged as key actors in the newly-formed opposition coalition, Pakatan Harapan (Coalition of Hope, or PH).

Never before in Malaysian politics had such a diverse number of prominent Malay leaders collectively come together to take on UMNO, a core reason why some analysts argued before the election that PH could unseat the ruling BN coalition, due also to a possible electoral swing in Malay-majority constituencies against an unpopular prime minister, Najib Razak. However, the BN was not expected to be unseated as PH was seen to comprise too many rather strange bedfellows, while serious and open tensions had surfaced among leaders in Anwar’s *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR). Indeed, given the uncustomary image of an opposition led by Mahathir, the former longstanding UMNO leader, PH had to convince the electorate that the coalition could govern in a stable manner, if it captured power.

However, aiding the PH was Najib’s unpopularity, due to controversies surrounding exposés about his personal slush fund, with money coming from his abuse of a government company, 1 MDB,\(^6\) as well as allegations of serious corruption involving the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA), whose settlers had long been hardcore UMNO supporters. These scandals revealed serious abuse of government-controlled GLC, with funds from them flowing into the political system and employed during general and state elections.\(^7\) Funds from the GLCs, which Najib could abuse as he concurrently functioned as the Minister of Finance, were believed to be used by him to consolidate his position in UMNO, including through the buying of support.\(^8\) The issues surrounding the abuse of GLCs and Najib’s slush fund had destabilised UMNO, contributing to serious intra-elite feuding that had culminated in a formidable new opposition party led by Mahathir.

These controversies were an indication of the persistent problem of patronage, corruption and rent-seeking in UMNO. These scandals had also deeply discredited UMNO’s partners in the BN, for their support of Najib. Meanwhile, a similar debilitating factional dispute had erupted between the so-called purists and mainstreamers in PAS. Apart from these feuds in UMNO and PAS, which led to the formation of two new Malay-based parties, Bersatu and Amanah, a predominantly Malay-based PKR was contesting in the GE14, indicating the serious intra-Malay cleavages that now prevailed in Malaysia.

The feuding and splits in UMNO\(^9\) and PAS saw the Malay votes split five-ways, allowing the PH to win the election on the back of non-Malay votes. Meanwhile, election candidacy continued to be a source of tussles and feuds among UMNO factions as the number of seats in parliamentary and state constituencies was limited and only a small number of politicians could be nominated. Stories of backstabbing and sabotage by those who were unhappy that they were not nominated as candidates had emerged in previous elections.
Articles in this special issue

The articles in this special issue seek to analyse how Najib resorted to the politics of patronage as well as a stress on Malay-Muslim identity to win the GE14 when the election posed a serious challenge to his grip on power. The post-colonial project of Malay-Muslim supremacy championed by UMNO since the 1970s has become well-established in Malaysia’s political discourses. The New Economic Policy (NEP), the key ethnically-based affirmative action programme introduced in 1970, was designed, among other things, to empower the Bumiputeras in business. Since the implementation of the NEP, which contributed to extensive state intervention in the economy, the nature of relations between the government and businesses has become extremely complex, based as they normally are on racial preferences. Decisions taken by the government based on the NEP have helped UMNO leaders secure business advantages for party members, often even to the detriment of the Malay populace, specifically the rural poor, the targeted beneficiaries. To this end, Bumiputera empowerment was conceptualised and articulated along two key strands of collective identity conceived interdependently, namely Malay (Mahathir’s Melayu Baru, or New Malay) and Muslim. Despite significant Malay-Muslim elite factionalism, UMNO’s project of ethno-religious nationalism has contributed significantly to consolidation of power by the BN.

In spite of the NEP and subsequent race-based affirmative action policies, Malays remain a majority of Malaysia’s low-income earners, while the poorest states in the country, Kelantan, Sabah, Terengganu and Kedah, have a Bumiputera-dominant population. Under Najib’s administration, in order to deal with these regional and income inequities, and recognising that these issues severely jeopardised UMNO’s control over the state, a range of public assistance programmes were introduced targeting vulnerable groups, though most were short-term in nature. For the young, an electoral cohort Najib needed to capture, apart from fee exemptions for primary and secondary school education and skills training for unemployed youths, the schemes included the Bantuan Khas Awal Persekolahan 1 Malaysia (BKAP1 M, or One Malaysia Early School’s Special Assistance), Baucar Buku 1 Malaysia (BB1 M, or One Malaysia Book Voucher) and Skim Latihan 1 Malaysia (SL1 M, or One Malaysia Training Scheme). Health and housing aid was provided through Klinik 1 Malaysia (K1 M, or One Malaysia Clinics) and Perumahan Rakyat 1 Malaysia (PE1 MA, or One Malaysia People’s Housing). However, the most prominent scheme targeting the poor was the Bantuan Rakyat 1 Malaysia (BR1M, or One Malaysia People’s Assistance), a cash transfer programme to support what the government called the ‘bottom 40%’. This meant that at least 12 million Malaysians were still in need of government aid. Interestingly enough, the government also insisted that the official poverty rate was a mere 0.4%. BR1M had, undoubtedly, been of much needed aid to low income families, while these cash transfers had spurred consumption, a key driver of growth. BR1M, introduced in 2012, was widely criticised as it was implemented just before the 2013 general election when the BN faced a unified opposition that was expected to secure power. The distribution of aid, normally along racial lines though now also on a class basis, helped the BN garner sufficient support to win seats to retain power, though the coalition lost the popular vote.

Before the GE14, attempts at creating Malay hegemonic rule had gained momentum with UMNO’s emphasis on ketuanan Melayu (Malay sovereignty) (Liow, 2015).
UMNO leaders had argued that the codified special position of the Malays was threatened by a Malaysian opposition dominated by the Chinese-led Democratic Action Party (DAP). Members of the BN argued that the DAP would seek to ameliorate the special privileges enjoyed by the Malays, demote the position of Islam and even eradicate the institution of Malay rulers. Ketuanan Melayu was used as a narrative to create a Malay-Muslim hegemonic rule where non-Malays would play a secondary role. The idea of Ketuanan Melayu was also used as a way for Najib to build relations with PAS. UMNO felt that this common agenda with PAS would lead to a split in the opposition votes and could secure the government for UMNO and BN. James Chin noted this contradiction of playing the Islamic card while leading a multi-ethnic coalition, unless the BN was merely meant to project the idea of UMNO’s inclusive image (Chin, 2017).

A key to understanding the various manifestations of UMNO’s Malay-Muslim identity project is a review of the analytical value of the concept of identity. Brubaker and Cooper challenged the essentialising character of the concept of identity, calling for more analytical finesse in understanding what ‘work the concept is supposed to do and how well it does it’ (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). As such, in sketching a guideline of analytical rigour for understanding identity, they highlight the importance of acknowledging “the claims and possibilities that arise from particular affinities and affiliation, from particular commonalities and connections, from particular stories and self-understandings, from particular problems and predicaments in a more differentiated manner (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 35).

In line with Brubaker and Cooper’s stance, this special issue assesses UMNO response to the serious challenge that the GE14 posed to BN rule by actively employing the concept of Malay-Muslim identity and how the electorate responded through the ballot box. Five key topics are reviewed here, namely how China featured in the election, the voting patterns of the rural and semi-urban Malay population in FELDA areas, as well as Sabahan and Malaysian youths, and how Malay-Muslim women in PAS and UMNO navigated their role in their respective parties. These studies will indicate that Sabahan and Malaysian youths voted against the Najib government, while the Malay populace in the FELDA areas delivered a mixed outcome, with some continuing to support Najib while others voted to remove him from office. In the case of Muslim women in UMNO and PAS, they rallied behind their respective parties thus relegating their stated women empowerment agenda to a secondary one.

David Han argues that foreign policy issues, including the increasing influence of China in Malaysia’s economy, were not as prominently featured in the GE14, as compared to domestic issues, and was not a decisive factor in determining the outcome of the election. However, foreign policy issues did receive more attention in GE14, compared to previous general elections. Employing Robert Putnam’s theoretical framework of two-level games, Han highlights how Prime Minister Najib relied on his able stewardship of Malaysia’s foreign policy and close relations with China to boost his legitimacy. Han asserts that the PH used controversial aspects of China investments in Malaysia to attack the BN. Najib had stressed state-state ties, involving GLCs and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) from China, to draw substantial investments in mega projects around the peninsula. This study highlights that the ironic aspect of UMNO’s pursuit of its Malay-Muslim supremacy agenda was that this did not preclude the party from relinquishing aspects of Malaysian sovereignty or Bumiputera economic privileges in major
infrastructure projects. In the GE14, the China issue did not provide the BN or UMNO with much political dividends. This is the case even though the BN had hoped that Najib’s well-publicised relationship with China would help the coalition gain the support of the Malaysian Chinese electorate.

Based on in-depth field research, Khor Yu Leng and Jeamme Chia assess the electoral performance of UMNO-BN in rural Peninsular Malaysia during GE14, specifically in and around the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) areas. Since FELDA, a statutory institution established in 1956 to resettle the poor, had helped a generation of landless Malays become a rural middle class, members of this constituency had been staunch supporters of UMNO. However, in the GE14, UMNO-BN saw its support in FELDA and many rural areas fall, largely due to intra-Malay elite competition in these constituencies. The five-way split in Malay votes eventually led to a mixed outcome in the states of Pahang and Johor. In Pahang, the split allowed UMNO to retain many of its seats due to the overwhelming Malay majority electorate in many of these FELDA seats. As such, the non-Malay votes, which swung in large numbers to the PH, did not significantly alter the final outcome of the election. This is despite the fact that the overall votes for UMNO actually decreased. In Johor, the opposite is true. The larger number of non-Malay voters in Johor led to UMNO losing a number of seats, even though overall support for the party increased in this state. Ultimately, despite dubious deals and settler gripes, an examination of detailed results in the FELDA areas shows that the five-way split of the Malay votes produced different outcomes depending on the strength of the non-Malay voters. The FELDA case points to the fact that the intra-Malay elite competition could produce different outcomes. Much like the cases of Malay majority seats elsewhere, the size of non-Muslim voters would ultimately determine the outcome of the contest.

Prashant Waikar’s article seeks to understand the factors that led to PH winning 80% of the youth votes and why this cohort of the electorate chose to reject Najib and UMNO. This study argues that the BN’s brand of politics, employing Malay-Muslim supremacy, was reliant on the practice of feudalistic politics which leans towards privileging older Malaysians. This conduct of feudalistic politics tended to disempower youths, resulting in many them choosing PH over the BN. Waikar argues that Malaysian youths could better relate to Mahathir, who they saw as a father of Malaysia’s modernisation, rather than Najib, who they associated with corruption and the mismanagement of the state. PH effectively utilised strategies such as the use of social media to disseminate the core tenets of its manifesto and tailored its messaging well when reaching out to youth voters. PH’s commitment to youth involvement in politics saw them fielding more young candidates and deploying popular Malay youth leaders such as PKR’s Nurul Izzah Anwar and Bersatu’s Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman to capture the support of this segment of the electorate. Many youths found they could relate better to these young politicians, compared to leaders of BN who were generally much older.

Aida Arosoaie’s article argues that members of Wanita UMNO and Dewan Muslimat PAS sought to promote women empowerment and greater female representation in politics within the Malay-Muslim community. Intriguingly, these two party wings sought to mobilise women to vote for their respective parties even though they were themselves in a subordinate position to their male peers. Their subordinate position in UMNO and in PAS was evident in the seats where women candidates were fielded, though the way they dealt with this gender issue differed. UMNO nominated female candidates in constituencies
deemed to be unwinnable, reflecting the little importance the party placed on women candidates. On the other hand, PAS fielded women in safe seats in an attempt to ‘protect’ them. This was due to a prevailing assumption that voters, especially in northern Malaysia, were less supportive of the involvement of women in politics. The study also investigates the self-positioning and capacity for the action of female members of UMNO and PAS during the GE14. The female candidates of both PAS and UMNO saw their role as assisting their respective parties protect the Malay-Muslim supremacy project.

Arnold Puyok and Piya Sukhani examined the results in the Borneo state of Sabah, from the lens of national identity. They dispel the notion that Sabahan voters were more concerned with local issues and not national ones. This study stresses that Sabah challenged the hegemonic project of a Malaysian national identity based on UMNO’s Malay-Muslim supremacy agenda by voting for Warisan which had offered itself as a local Sabahan party with representatives from all the different ethnic groups in Sabah, including the Malays, Chinese, Kadayandusunmurut (KDM) communities. Shafie Apdal, the leader of Warisan and a former UMNO vice-president and longstanding federal cabinet member, was able to transform his image as a pro-federal leader to a pro-Sabahan leader. As such, Shafie was able to not only win the support of his core supporters in Eastern Sabah, but made inroads into other Malay-majority and KDM constituencies. This subsequently led to Warisan’s capture of the Sabah state government. As this study shows, Sabah contributed to the Najib and UMNO losing power and sought to redefine the state’s role in contributing to a new notion of a Malaysian national identity. In this context, the idea was projected that Sabah was able to function as a stable multi-cultural and multi-religious society, devoid as it was of the politics of Malay-Muslim hegemony.

**Postscript: the fall of PH**

In the aftermath of GE14, there was an assumption on the part of many observers that the election had ushered in a new era of Malaysian politics, where the Malay-Muslim hegemonic project would become less relevant. Contrary to this assumption, ethnonationalist sentiments, especially within the Malay community, rose to unprecedented levels. Fuelled by a sense of insecurity that the country had now come under the ‘political control’ of non-Muslims, seen in particular with the appointment of DAP’s Lim Guan Eng as finance minister and Tommy Thomas as attorney-general. The sense of insecurity among Malays was further fuelled by the fact that the DAP was a dominant member of the PH coalition.

The rhetoric employed by UMNO and PAS that the rights of the Malays were under threat due to the DAP appeared to have found traction amongst a segment of the electorate. UMNO and PAS leaders argued that the PH government’s intent to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and the Rome Statute, was an attempt to clip the wings of the Malay rulers and eliminate policies that had privileged the Bumiputeras (Osman, 2019).

This sense of ethnic insecurity brought together two of the worst foes in Malaysian politics, UMNO and PAS, under a coalition called the Muafakat Nasional (National Pact). Following a string of successes during by-elections (Hussin, 2020), where the consolidation of the Malay-Muslim votes produced favourable outcomes for both PAS and UMNO, the leaders of these two parties decided that their ultimate survival
depended on their ability to work in an alliance. Leaders from both parties decided to focus on addressing what they saw as the decimation of Islam and Malay rights by the PH government (Osman & Waikar 2019). To further complicate the already crowded scene of advocates of Malay-Muslim hegemony, leaders of Prime Minister Mahathir’s own party, Bersatu, began asserting a Malay supremacy agenda. An assembly, titled the Malay Dignity Congress, was organised by elements close to Bersatu to address challenges facing the Malays. During this congress, the speakers claimed that the Malays had been marginalised and belittled (M. Abdullah, 2020). Attending this congress, where Mahathir delivered the keynote address, were key leaders of UMNO and PAS, though prominent PH leaders such as Anwar Ibrahim were not invited. At this congress, numerous demands were made including that all senior government appointments be reserved for Malay-Muslims, that more assistance be rendered to poor Malays and that the Islamic character of the Malays be stressed (Povera & Yunus, 2019). The congress signalled that the PH coalition parties were divided over the issue of Malay-Muslim hegemony, with Bersatu sharing much in common with UMNO and PAS.

It was, to a large extent, this desire to promote the idea of Malay-Muslim hegemony that fuelled the controversy that led to Mahathir’s resignation as prime minister. The appointment of Muhyiddin Yassin, deputy president of Bersatu, as the eighth Prime Minister of Malaysia was supported primarily by parliamentarians from Bersatu, PAS, UMNO, a splinter group from PKR and the Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS, Sarawak Party Alliance) (Malay Mail, 2020). This alliance is underpinned by the idea of Malay-Muslim hegemony, a concept that is likely to be further entrenched in public policies, thus reinforcing it as an important feature of Malaysian politics.

Notes

1. The system of consociationalism offered by multi-party, multi-ethnic coalitions, such as the BN, emerged as an effective means of consolidating the electoral support of the main ethnic communities in Malaysia. This formula has helped the BN draw support on the basis of both ethnicity and class. The main bastion of support for UMNO has long been the peninsula’s rural Malays and Sabah’s rural Muslims. UMNO’s leading partners in the BN were the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), responsible for marshalling urban, upper middle class – and business class – Chinese support, and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) whose support base has been the Indian working class. However, since the 1990s, the MCA and MIC have been extremely dependent on UMNO to win parliamentary and state seats during general elections. The inclusion of numerous ethnically-based parties in Sarawak and Sabah in the BN presented the coalition with a semblance of a national identity. For a discussion on the BN, UMNO hegemony and electoral trends, see Johan Saravanamuttu, Power Sharing in a Divided Nation: Mediated Communalism and New Politics over Six Decades of Elections in Malaysia (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2016).

2. This electoral outcome was not widely anticipated because of the multitude of multi-cornered contests in parliamentary constituencies across the peninsula. Malaysian history indicates that multi-cornered contests have favoured the incumbent ruling coalition.

3. Before the GE14, many analysts had spoken of a Malay swing against the BN. However, what was not expected was the wave against the BN in Sabah and Sarawak. In fact, the volume of support for the opposition in Sarawak was astonishing, seen as it was as a ‘safe deposit’ for the BN.
4. An assessment of Malaysia’s well-embedded patronage system would draw attention to one crucial point: the state under the BN operated at multiple levels in the economy, that is through UMNO, a hegemonic executive, and influential politicians. The issue of UMNO warlordism, seen so clearly at the state level, became endemic in the run-up to GE14. However, intra-UMNO feuding was not a new phenomenon. Feuds have persistently emerged within UMNO over the abuse of publicly-sanctioned Malay patronage to serve vested interests. This was evident on two occasions, in 1987 and 1998, when deep fissures emerged in UMNO. On both occasions, these intra-UMNO feuds similarly prompted the emergence of breakaway parties led by prominent leaders. For an in-depth discussion of the politics of patronage, see Gomez and Jomo (1999).

5. During Mahathir’s long tenure, he had experimented with mixing affirmative action-driven enterprise development with state-led industrialisation, as well as the privatisation of a myriad of government-linked companies (GLCs). Mahathir persistently argued that his unique policy planning methods would help him attain several parallel ambitions, specifically the creation of an industrialised economy led by Malay entrepreneurs through conglomerates of international repute. This mode of policy implementation, with a shift in focus from institutions, such as the GLCs, to individuals, marked the commencement of a patronage system in business that is now a fundamental feature of Malaysia’s political economy, contributing to serious corruption and rent-seeking. Interestingly, in his second bid to become prime minister, Mahathir claimed his primary objective, if returned to power, was to eradicate corruption. He did not, however, advocate the need to reform Malaysia’s now well-entrenched and debilitating politics of patronage.

6. In 2015, when the 1MDB scandal broke, it was revealed that money from this government enterprise amounting to RM2.6 billion had been channelled into Najib’s personal bank account. Najib claimed this money was a donation, from the Middle East, given to finance the 2013 elections.

7. When the United States’ Department of Justice released a report on 1MDB, it alleged that US$3.5 billion had been misappropriated from this GLC. For a discussion on this scandal’s impact on Malaysian politics, see Case (2017).

8. For a review of the abuse of GLCs and the politics of patronage before the GE14, see Murniati (2019).

9. While the issue of UMNO factionalism was not new – indeed, all parties in BN and PH had factions – the practice of patronage became more pronounced before the GE14. After all, UMNO leaders were aware that if they continued to dispense patronage to the grassroots, this made it difficult for members to defect, even sabotage their own candidates for fear of losing access to government concessions if their party lost power.

10. Bumiputera, which means ‘sons of the soil’, is the term used in reference to ethnic Malays and other indigenous peoples. Of Malaysia’s 30 odd million multi-ethnic population in 2019, Bumiputeras accounted for 65 percent, Chinese 26 percent, Indians 8 percent and the rest comprising other ethnic groups.

11. The NEP was introduced to rectify inequities in corporate ownership patterns that had emerged during British colonial rule. However, the policy eventually served as a justification for the targeting of an elite group within the business community as recipients of state-created concessions, as this served as a mechanism to promote the rise of Malay-owned conglomerates. For an in-depth review of the NEP, see Edmund Terence Gomez and Johan Saravanamuttu (eds), The New Economic Policy in Malaysia: Affirmative Action, Horizontal Inequalities and Social Justice (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2013).

12. The topic of UMNO factionalism has been consistently associated with the issues of patronage and warlords, usually division heads, who are responsible for ensuring that the grassroots remained loyal to the party. During the GE14 campaign period, there was much talk of money being sent to the divisions to mobilise grassroots support, as well as to fund them to work the ground to muster electoral support. These warlords, after all, reputedly had a strong following among the grassroots whose support was vital if
UMNO hoped to win parliamentary and state seats in an extremely tough general election. For an insightful discussion on the funding of the grassroots in Malaysia, see Weiss (2016).

13. The state governments in the federation also offer a variety of welfare assistance schemes, though they are not well-structured and not uniform.

14. For an assessment of Malaysia’s 13th General Election, see Welsh (2013).

15. Although Malaysia had attained a high level of industrialisation, the country remained heavily dependent on foreign investments to generate growth. For this reason, the government had to adopt novel methods to secure investments. This resulted in the implementation of major public infrastructure projects through GLC-SOE joint-ventures. Malaysia’s first GLC-SOE project, launched in February 2013, was the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park (MCKIP), a US$480 million venture. For an account of this project, see Leng (2013).

16. About 1.2 million voters were located in FELDA schemes covering 54 rural and semi-urban parliamentary constituencies. A majority of these schemes were situated in Johor, Pahang and Negri Sembilan, key UMNO stronghold states where the party hoped to garner much support.

17. For examples of this, see Ali (2019) and Junid (2019).

References


