

# Elections and its impact on Malaysia

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The 14<sup>th</sup> General Election in Malaysia has just ended on 09/05/2018 which marked a momentous history of the country. The 61-year rule of Barisan Nasional (BN) had collapsed and now replaced by a new coalition of Pakatan Harapan (PH) led by the ex-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. He is now the Prime Minister of Malaysia for a second time at the age of 92. BN won only 79 out of 222 contested parliamentary seats while PH, which is represented by Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP) and Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah) won 113 seats. The rest of the seats are won by Parti Islam Se Malaysia (PAS) with 18 seats, Parti Warisan Sabah 8 seats, Parti Solidariti Tanah Airku 1 seat and independent representatives 3 seats. The PH Parliamentary members consist of 58 Muslims and 66 non-Muslims.

After Mahathir had been sworn-in as the 7<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia, a number of expected and long-awaited events have taken place. His imprisoned former deputy, who is also the de facto leader of PKR, Anwar Ibrahim, have been granted a complete Royal Pardon by the King a day before Ramadhan, enabling him to return to politics and may be given way, as agreed by PH, to become the Prime Minister replacing Mahathir. Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, who is also the President of PKR, is appointed as Deputy Prime Minister.

On top of the new ministerial appointments, Mahathir had also announced the establishment of Council of Elders who will become advisors to the government especially in economic issues. The five members of the Council are well-known figures and experts in the capitalist economic system. This certainly means that Malaysia will be categorically confined to the Kufr-West economic system.

The former Prime Minister, Najib Razak, who since resigned from the top post of his party (United Malays National Organization - UMNO) and also as Chairman of BN, has been put under investigation by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for the most scandalous 1 Malaysian Development Berhad (1MDB) issue and other related corruption scandal. The police have so far seized 284 boxes containing high-end designer handbags and other bags that were filled with jewelries, watches and cash during a raid at three condominium units related to Najib. It was reported that more than RM100 million (USD30 million) in cash and more than 100 kilograms of gold bars were seized, but the police have yet to confirm all the items. The police said it is going to be very difficult to estimate the value of the items seized as there were so many items and so much cash. A few other BN leaders are also put under MACC's investigation and a few more is expected to face the same fate.

Ever since the independence in 1957, Malaysia for the first time is witnessing leaders of opposition parties in the new cabinet line-up, be it Muslims or non-Muslims. It is noteworthy that all the new cabinet members are preachers of democracy, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The same goes to all the members of Parliament. Therefore, without doubt the democratic, and not the Islamic system, will remain as the ruling system in Malaysia. The Muslim members from PH have always regarded themselves as progressive Muslims. With them in power, it is apparent that the democratic liberal concept will color the country. Malaysia may become more democratic and liberal and the intellectual struggle between Islamic and Kufr thought may escalate.

There will be no change in the system even though there are promises from the new PH government that they will abolish some draconian laws from the previous regime. They have also abolished, as they promised, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 6% imposed by the previous regime. However, all other types of Islam-prohibited taxes remain. Mahathir has promised that he will preserve the rule of law, which definitely refers to the democratic rule of laws, even though at the same time he calls people to obey Al-Quran and As-Sunnah. Clearly, the Federal Constitution, being the highest law of the land inherited from the British, which is diametrically opposed to Al-Quran and As-Sunnah, remains intact.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the American Ambassador to Malaysia, H.E Kamala Shirin Lakhdar, had a one-hour meeting with Mahathir on 21/05/2018. Then, on 24/05/2018 she made a courtesy visit to the newly appointed Defense Minister who greeted her warmly. With these two visits, the signal from America is very clear to those who have sight.

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