Is Malaysia Begged to Differ from the Global 'Vista' Democracy?

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In the Malaysia's 2018 General Election, the supremacy of Barisan Nasional (National Front), started to deteriorate when the two-third usual majority suddenly successfully is being denied. However, the transformations in Malaysian's socio-political culture have created some evolutions and repercussions in line with the current development. The scenario has been observed through some different phases that prolonged from traditional Malay Sultanate of Malacca to an open practice in the recent political trend. Malaysia (formerly known as Malaya) had gone through various political development until the existence of ethnicity-based-orientation as well as the domination of the ruling party for a long period of time via total political-hegemony practice. Apparently, hegemony is said to be more appealing when the civil society's institution are literally consented by their submissive action towards the ruling class, thus this kind of vertical top-down form of governing is voluntarily abide by them. The transition leads to the new practice of counter-hegemony-post hegemony which goes against the current practice. Furthermore, the reflections of democratic practices through the power sharing between Pakatan Harapan (namely composed of Bersatu, Amanah, DAP and PKR) and National Front party were strongly significant in the Malaysia's democracy. However, the discussions of sense of loyalty, transparency, good governance, civil rights, power of the media and other elements still be questioned by the people. This paper analyses the 'natural obedience' in the politi-

cal system whereby Islam as an official religion plays dominant role in Malaysian context. This resulted to the challenges put forward by the opposition created new phenomenal political paradigm shift among the people. The political survival among the political parties in Malaysia displayed interesting landscape on the society.

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Malaysia has managed to practice the arrangement democracy effectively until the year 1969. Nidzam (2006, p. 69) stated that the parliament was suspended for more a year after the said event but was again practiced in the year 1970 until date. Before the 13th May 1969 event, the development of politics in Malaysia was performing well. Nevertheless, this does not reflect that there are no conflicts and events, which involve force. Throughout the six weeks of the 1969 Election campaign, it has lead to various racial issues that almost caused the emotional state of the Malays and Non Malays to explode. Even though the campaign went on well without any untoward events, the feelings of tension became obvious as the Election Day on the 10th May 1969 approaches (Comber 1983, p. 63).

In the said election campaign, the leaders do not seem to have a new formula to fight and receive a strong contest from the opposition parties like PAS, DAP, Gerakan and PPP (Comber 1983, p. 63). To the Alliance Party, they were very confident of winning. Thus, they have permitted the ongoing campaign to the maximum under the Constitution (Mahathir 1999, p. 6). In terms of the Perikatan election manifesto, Comber (1983, p. 63) stated that it is more of a government report. The Manifesto summarizes the success of Perikatan in power after winning, focusing on the 'economic development', 'defence and safety', 'international affairs', and 'racial integrity' (Comber 1983, pp. 63-64). This harmony does not cause anxiety on the National Front as the governing party but in fact has made it a lot stronger.

Therefore, the question that states the democracy system in practical has thus far been unable to be fully executed has arisen. Contrary to the said guarantee, many scholars define the type of leadership practiced in Malaysia as immature, no freedom, "half cook", limited, authoritative and full of control. Whether we realise it or not, the definition of democracy in Malaysia proves that the governing system in

Malaysia is in fact a form of hegemony. It is obvious that the elements of hegemony like being too extreme towards a leader, loyal and faithful, obeying to orders given, complying with the leader's wishes, opposing all activities to topple the government and so on existed but in fact is hidden in the Malaysian democracy system.

The emphasis on democracy based on its practiced in Malaysia intend for the peace and political stability to be practiced (Lijphart 1997, p. 152). This strategy has been applied to preserve the public's loyalty towards their leader who has become a 'protector' in their daily lives. This hidden practiced of hegemony causes the public to give their undying support to their leader even though they were fully controlled.

This phenomenon has led a scholar like Syed Husin Ali (1996, p . 95) to be of opinion that this has become a norm to the monarch or local leaders asking for the public's undying support. For example, in the traditional leadership system the concept of 'loyalty' is link to 'betrayal'. This means that the king cannot be opposed because it will be regarded as treacherous. As a result, this has led to an inferior psychology among the subjects until they become devoted and 'servant-spirited'. The neofeudalistic people of today have a feeling of fear, humble and 'servant-spirited' towards their king or leader and this feeling has led to them having the same feelings towards their new leaders. With this power the leaders are able to expand their wings to the economic sectors and leaving a very narrow road which then lead to the struggle among the people. Obviously, the political power has given them the opportunity to expand themselves in the economic sectors and the control on economy has strengthened their political position. All government machinery and other government tools are also used to strengthen and protect their interest. The socialist political process plays a role in ensuring that this practice and perception is ongoing for the next coming generation when youngsters are trained to be loyal and be afraid of their leaders.

According to Nidzam (2006, pp. 256-257), the public's acceptance and loyalty towards their leaders, the leader's power and involvement in economy has been conferred by lots of titles to recognise their contributions. This showed that the elements of feudalism still exist in democracy. These elements among others have a picture of the subjects or people still being loyal to their more powerful leader. The voices of these leaders must be complied with and not opposed. They are also lavish with titles such as Tun, Tan Sri, Datuk and Datuk Seri. How-

ever, it is undeniable that the democracy was practiced together with the citizen's traditional ways as culture and a strong believe in religion which has become an important essence.

The type and practiced of the Malays political culture in this globalisation era has been managed to be constructed. Not only it was constructed but it goes right to the foundation of the spirit of the Malays who are too absorb with their culture and having a strong believe in religion, therefore it needed reconstruction. Without us realizing it, the leaders have managed to gain full control until they are in their comfort zone and managed to reconstruct the people to accept their dominant position without much questioning. Obviously, the political hegemony is visible in the Malay political culture especially when it is a result of unification in the Malays traditional structure. Therefore, the public became weaker politically including the NGOs, the opposition parties, media and judiciary whose words and fights on modern democracy are left unattended.

With that, all government machinery and tools including the Acts, Enactments, police departments, military, the prosecutors, courts and so forth are used to strengthen and preserve the higher positioned interests. The socialists' political process plays a role in ensuring this as an ongoing process. Besides that, the government to control the political situation in Malaysia and punish executive offenders (Mauzy, 1995, p. 117) uses the introductions of several Acts like the Incitement Act, Official Secrets Acts, Internal Security Act (ISA), Print Press and Publication Act, University and Colleges Act (AUKU).

The democracy practiced is not an open democracy but only limited; it has an element of authoritarian and so forth. Even if a writer or a journalist writes or reports on certain issues of government secrets like (a scandal, deviation and elements of nepotism), they will be arrested and charged under the Official Secrets Act 1972. This shows that the position of the elite political government is not at stake and their influence became stronger. The fanatical hegemony towards a leader is not relevant anymore in Malaysian current democracy and should be replaced with the hegemony culture of being 'afraid' of a leader. This phenomenon picture the culture of being 'afraid' is not only to threaten the public of the punishment against them by a leader but the feeling of 'afraid' to lose their interests if the orders are opposed.

However, in 9th May 2018, Malaysian politics was changed irrevocably with the election of its opposition for the first time in 60 years of

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independence. Interestingly, the change of government or the running political party happened in peace and no war, bloodshed involved. Malaysians are so blessed with this peace change. Accountability, openness and democratic progress appear to be finally within reach as claimed.

Feudalistic Democracy in Malaysia

The elements of feudalism still exist till to date because the monarchs is pictures as a protector of people and are very powerful and have '*daulats*'. For example, in the traditional Malay politics the phrases or words that picture a king as a powerful symbol and have a connection with God were also used like "a king is a reflection of God on earth". This phrase is a reminder to the people that the king is of higher position and possesses special relationship spiritually. These words have placed the people to be more afraid towards their king. The level of loyalty of local people at that time can be regarded as a blind acceptance, which only accepts whatever orders from their leaders. They need to instill full loyalty, respect and faithfulness towards the leadership of their king and seldom they become disloyal.

Therefore, Syed Hussein Al Attas (1972, p. 109) agrees with the said assertion and regarded the state and federal state have spend lots of money in giving titles like '*Tun*' and '*Dato*' to the experienced political leaders and bureaucrats who act as an honest protector in this monarchical constitutional system. The amount of honors given has increased since the independence of Malaysia for 51 years.

Position, status and awards have replaced the traditional practice during the Melaka Sultanate in the era of feudal Malay politics. This situation pictures UMNO leadership as a 'hero' and 'savior' in the Malay community. Contrary to heroes like Hang Tuah, Hang Jebat, Tun Perak, Tun Biajid and many more who were discussed in earlier chapters but in this neo feudal era, UMNO can influence the governing country's decision. Mahathir (2007) felt that there is no difference between the people's loyalty during the feudal time and the people's loyalty towards their current leaders.

According to him, the level of loyalty given towards their leaders or government is a reward to their loyal services towards them in response to their protection. This is a main factor towards undying loyalty that has been formed a long time ago in this neo feudal era. Mahathir's thoughts have been very interesting when he denies that loyalty given by the people is not a form of political hegemony. If the

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people love and is loyal to their king, leaders, '*penghulu*', principal and the '*wakil rakyat*' children, it is not a big issue. They are loyal because they know and trust their leader. If they did not feel oppressed, pressured, abused, it means that they are comfortable with their doings.

Therefore, the system of governance in Malaysia has been formed through a social bargaining process that proves the leaders have inherited the ability of the earlier patriots forming a 'daulat' country intelligently since then. The concept of nationalism is seen as a tool of firm hegemony in governing Malaysia inoculated by the spirit of patriotism and loyalty to the country. The shifting of paradigm has not been excluded from the scope of discussion about the interest of Malay culture which thinks highly of their king or leaders since then.

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The State has not given at all any free space free participation. The competition is so narrow, and the government to put pressure always used the state and this gives them extra power. Besides that, the government party has taken the opportunity to draft and amend Acts to protect the government from any threatening challenges. For example, the ISA can detain anyone without trial and was officially introduced in Article 149 of the Malaysian Constitution. This Act is also used to prevent opposition leaders or any other organisation from challenging the status quo (Jesudason 1995, p. 338).

Their position became more consolidated and harder to challenge that makes it easier for them to gain more interests in the economic sector. Further, in the current democratic governing system, there are laws to control and protect the higher class's position. However, most political Malay leaders are of the view that the enforcement of laws has permitted the taking over of individuals land for the purpose of development and this should be restricted and be more transparent to guarantee the people's rights in their comfort zone.

The uniqueness of Malaysian political culture is the royal institution or the royal government as privilege of the Malaysian nation. The constitution of Malaysia provides for the reign of the monarchy as one of the elements of the eternal constitution of the country. The hierarchy of power and the role of the royal institution in the landscape of national government in the days before the arrival of the British colonialists to this day have undergone a process of power transition and a drastically changing role. However, the features of this tradition remain to acknowledge and uphold the dignity of the nation's most memorable institution and its contribution to the formation of Malaysia today.

The Constitution of the Federation of Malaya 1957 established the Yang di-Pertuan Agong based on the recommendations in the Reid Commission that included provisions on the "General Assembly on the constitution of the Federation to be elected from the Royal Highness." "The Yang di-Pertuan Agong is said to be a symbol of national unity. On July 30 witnessed the historic event of His Majesty's Majesty XVI Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Al-Musta'in Billah and His Royal Highness Tunku Azizah Alexandria's Aminah is celebrated despite its simplicity and is witnessed by people all over the country. Sultan of Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah Ibni Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Al Musta'in Billah Shah has been elected as the new Yang di-Pertuan Agong for a period of five years effective Jan 31, 2019. YDPA replaced Sultan Muhammad V who resigned as the 15th Yang di-Pertuan Agong effective January 6, after holding the position since December 13, 2016. The royal institution in Malaysia is a symbol of the unity and prosperity, stability and grandeur of the nation. The prosperity and splendor of a country lies not only in the achievements but in the glory of Malaysia as the honor given to the royal institution reflects Malaysia's rich customs, culture and identity as a sovereign and respected foreign country.

Gateway to Current Malaysian Democracy
Urban poverty is an important issue as a study conducted by the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) shows that more than two-thirds of Malaysians now live in urban areas. The definition of urban poverty is still debated by looking at various contexts based on various factors and current trends. Poverty is often referred to as a phenomenon of inadequacy, inadequacy or instability of household income leading to inadequate or incomplete consumption, the risk of failure to obtain facilities and goods especially basic necessities, low quality housing that is prone to health problems, crime and natural disasters, discrimination and limited access to the formal labour market, especially to women and certain ethnic groups.

There is no doubt that rapid development is concentrated in uncharted urban areas to stand in line with other developed countries. Malaysia is no exception to setting a high benchmark to ensure that Malaysia achieves high-income countries with a strong and stable economy set by YAB PM's new target by 2025. The 11th Malaysia Plan

(11MP) covering the period between 2016 by 2020 will set the country's path towards greater national status and greater inclusion. This effort will be achieved by presenting six strategic milestones covering a range of development issues including equity, inclusiveness, environmental sustainability, human capital development and infrastructure. Sustainability is the significant criteria that reflected the success of Malaysian economy.

Whatever approach and strategy to take and take has a positive and negative impact on the country as well as the people living in Malaysia. As such, the 11th Plan also places emphasis on increasing labour market outcomes and targeting increasing employment income, female labour force participation and skilled employment, as well as enhancing the quality of education and skills matching to industry needs to address any possibility of engaging Malaysians as a whole.

High cost of living, urban poverty and overpriced housing are increasingly affecting low- and middle-income groups or categorised as B40 and M40. The Malaysian government has always given serious attention to helping address the problems faced by the group. Even for the poor, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (KPKT) has taken the initiative to establish an Urban Poverty Eradication Program (PPKB) aimed at helping Malaysians in urban poor and low-income groups improve their quality of life while reducing the burden of family dependence. The PPKB target group comprises B40 households, comprising households earning less than RM3, 860 a month and these include poor and *miskin tegar*.

Scientifically and academically, Satterthwaite's study (2001: 146) states that urban poverty exists when there is insufficient income, poor asset ownership, inadequate and comfortable housing, incomplete public infrastructure, inadequate provision of basic services, lack or lack of safety net, lack of protection for the poor and the poor have no channels of speech for the purpose of seeking help from various parties.

However, there are numerous reports, news and articles that refer to the city's poverty from the perspective of the individual's economic status and household income in urban areas and more. The writing is aimed at highlighting the low income group of RM2500 with a comprehensive package of options such as owning a car, renting a house while waiting for the opportunity to buy a home, using the latest mobile phones, shopping comfortably, having a credit card, vacation-

ing at both domestic and abroad that can be listed as a lifestyle of the people of this developed age, especially in the urban areas. Classical lifestyles and their own status cannot be altered or forced to change if certain individuals are constantly blocking such a lifestyle from being excluded from the urban poor. Can they be placed in the same category as the urban poor if they have such a lifestyle? If they are not facing any problems in terms of debt and the hardships of living due to such living conditions, they are very wise in managing personal finances. However, if this is the case then it is a social disease that needs to be addressed.

Anyway, whatever you may wish to call it, the May 2018 general election or GE14 was both good and bad. Good for whom and bad for whom? Well, that all depends on who you are. Some see GE14 as the day the New Malaysia was born. Some see GE14 as finally a dream come true. Some see GE14 as the day Malaysia was freed from bondage. Some see GE14 as a tragedy. Nevertheless, what cannot be denied is GE14 was the day Islam finally won. For 68 years since 1951, the Malays have been divided regarding the position of Islam. Some say Malaysia is an Islamic country. Some say Malaysia is a secular country. Some say Islam is the official religion of the country. Some say Islam is the religion of the Federation but not the official religion of the country per se. Some say Sharia law takes precedence while some say common law does instead.

Hegemony of Media and Islam
The introduction of several Acts to stop the freedom of mass media from the government's aspects is to stabilize the country's peaceful environment. According to the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984, Section 7(1) stated that the Ministry of Home Affairs has the authority to grant, deny and withdraw any publication permit as they wish. (Rosidah 1997, p. 99). As far as the public is concerned, every Malaysian citizen has the rights of freedom to obtain knowledge and the freedom to obtain various opinions and views. However, the Malaysian government lately has strictly controlled the media activities and strict in granting media license. Reason being is to block or evade groups and free organisations from publishing and broadcasting issues that portray bad images on the government. Whether direct or indirectly there are individuals with interest to preserve their status quo by using the media as their hegemony agent.

The government has played a dominant role in ensuring that sensitive issues or political issues and filter any information before it is made known to the public. These filtering by the media responsible of reporting such events and the media are subjected to several rules, regulations, and Acts, which barred the media from reporting the truth. The media operates as a source of information and not to persuade the public to act as such when any information is reported.

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In the event the public obtained such favourable and positive news or information, their thoughts and movement will make them more optimistic. It is true that information reported by the media to public is not parallel with the context and actual meanings to be made known. According to Shaukat (2004:2), *"The capsules of information we get are often detached from their contexts and meanings and are essentially packaged for easy consumption. For instance, before we are told about the real causes of a riot, another riot plague plane crash war is upon us."* The media control is an easy and smart route which is benefited by the government as a hegemony agent to provide information that   eventually will influence the public's thinking.

When the media is strictly controlled, it deters the public from their rights of freedom as stated in the Malaysian Constitution. The media is prone to broadcast and promote the elite political and economic agenda while the society's autonomic interest, poverty, needing help and group outcast's rights to justification will be ceaseless. In reality, the mass media role has to be parallel with the theory of social responsibility that gives freedom to the press, for example, an individual's freedom of speech and both basic freedoms are seen as a moral right, which cannot be disrupted by the country (Abdul Latiff 1988).

With that, the main media will play an important role in controlling the public's mind, will not support any reports from alternative parties, and will always label them as a defector, destroyer of a country's future, traitor, a pompous etc. This sentiment further strengthens the status quo of the government for managing to gain support and trust from the public. It is undeniable that the role of schools and universities are used to further strengthen the hegemonies politics of the government among students and educators. The information about the governance system can be provided without a flaw in accordance with the ready-made system and executed all orders given by the government efficiently.

Therefore, the Malaysian media has suggested several motions to the government to reach transparency in media democracies; the gov-

ernment should abolish all controlling laws. In addition, whichever political parties cannot monopolize the media and any interconnected commercial interest. As the media has become more corporative with stricter control by the parties who has political and economic interest, the media should not take sides with any individuals, political parties, groups and others to guarantee full freedom to the media.

The mass media are regarded as an instrument that can strengthen the loyalty of local societies and enhance the development of political parties. Realizing that the mass media be it the press i.e. newspapers and magazines and electronic media like television, radio, other visual aids that is able to give wider coverage right up to the countryside, it is definitely undeniable. The mass media is often an instrument used by certain parties to create racial tensions among our multi racial society. According to the research by Syed Arabi (1994), he stated that the mass media can influence strongly people's attitudes especially during election process.

Besides that, the print media has been manipulated by the political and economic elites to exclaim the solidarity of society, to smear or purposely discussing sensitive issues that risen the public's anger. As an example, Dr Mahathir has given warnings to a Chinese daily (*Nanyang Siang Pau*) because of the issues played out about *Sekolah Wawasan*. The said issue is regarded as a sensitive issue and probably will create tension among the multi racial society. Before that, in 1987 during the *Tall Grass Operation* (*Operasi Lalang*), the government has acted against the daily *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, *The Star* and *Watan* for spreading racial issues. The government is of the opinion that these dailies have been spreading news, which might cause tension among people, and this information should not be reported to the public.

Magazines learned irresponsible group of people in creating racial tension, religious tension, education, economy, politics and much more has also exploited books and novels. This sort of interests can affect the harmony of society. The efforts of print media should not be look down because the words are able to change and construct the minds of the society. For television programs, they are prone towards presenting government issues to instill public's loyalty towards the government. Most television channels present government agendas like the national development, education, society social culture and inserting elements of government's "loyal services". These issues or agenda are controlled and complied nicely to ensure that the govern-

ment always receives support from the public. The message in the special presentation is clear in fostering and highlighting the Malays fights through UMNO and thus succeeding in governing Malaysia.

Various slogans and symbols are used to portray the Malaysian people's unity towards the government. The element of hegemony is dominant thus far. It seems that the electronic media will only side certain parties and those who supported the government or the governing party. As this while, the rights of freedom of the people and opposition parties are pushed aside and their struggle and fights not shown in the electronic media like television because everything is controlled and blocked prompting them to use alternative channels which is seen to be more effective and fast through the use of internet. Even the mass media be it the print media or electronic media is able to disintegrate the races in Malaysia if it is not taken seriously by the government because the Malaysian people is still not able to leave their ethnicity whether they realise it or not. That was what happened previously before *Pakatan Harapan* came into power.

While many Western observers continue to argue that Islam is incompatible with democracy - Malaysia beg to differ. Malaysia is leading the charge for democratic politics in their immediate region, and perhaps the world. Democracy is determined by many different elements: culture, wealth, equalities, education, and some will say, religion. Religion as a determinant of democratic development has been extensively studied and many arguments have been presented supporting the claim that religion hinders democracy, while others are less convinced. Since Samuel P. Huntington published his book, *Clash of Civilisation*, there has been an increased focus on the relationship between Islam and democracy. Huntington argued that the world order in the 20th century has shifted into a clash between the West and the East, specifically between the West and Islam.

He argues that this clash is highlighted by Muslim resistance to democratic development and modernity, which he attributes to the nature of the religion of Islam. Although Huntington is supported by many in this claim, he failed in providing a concrete, practical explanation for the lack of democracy in Muslim countries. This essay will first analyse the arguments Huntington makes about Islam and democracy, second, it will discuss debates that oppose his claims, third, it will present empirical data to test his claims, and lastly, the essay will provide alternative explanations for the lack of democracy in the Muslim world.

In any discussion concerning democracy it is essential to define the term and set a standard for what constitutes a democratic system. Scholars have not been subtle about their debate over the requirements of democracy, but nevertheless they have found some common ground in the institution of elections. Citizen participation through elections is one of the most important indicators for a democratic system, but it is not enough because even authoritarian regimes may hold elections and feign democracy.

Therefore, for this discussion, two important questions must be answered about democracy: First, what constitutes a democratic system? And second, is the concept of democracy dichotomous or graded? In other words, are political systems either democratic or non-democratic, or are they either *more* democratic or *less* democratic? The idea of the coexistence of democracy and Islam has raised controversy among writers and theorists: on the one hand, many present significant empirical evidences to prove that in Muslim countries, democracy is either weak or non-existent and they use religion to explain this phenomenon. Others suggest that religion cannot be used to explain democratic development, and hence, they attribute the lack of democracy in Muslim countries not to Islam, but to other factors.

Both writers (Huntington and Fukuyama) believed that Islam is the reason Muslim countries are lacking modernity and democracy, and thus, it is important to test their claims by looking at authentic Islamic doctrine and whether it truly is incompatible with democracy, and second, by analysing empirical data to uncover Muslim attitudes towards democracy. o be drawn into an argument about any necessary incompatibility, or for that matter compatibility, between Islam and democracy is to accept precisely the false premise that there is one true, traditionally established 'Islamic' answer to the question, and that this timeless 'Islam' rules social and political practice. There is no such answer and no such 'Islam.'

Many writers, excluding Huntington and Fukuyama, understand that Islam cannot be referred to as one form. True, the ideal, authentic religion has its own political doctrine, but the Islam that is practiced by Muslims around the world may not necessarily adhere to this authenticity. We have found that Islam is compatible with democracy and Muslims attitudes are not only positive towards it, but by and large, Muslims prefer a democratic political system over other systems. And although Huntington and Fukuyama failed in their assumption that

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Islam hinders democratic development, they correctly pointed out the lack of democracy in the Muslim world. If Islam is not the cause of this democratic deficiency, then what is?

What accounts for Muslim countries' rejection of democracy? And what factors play a significant role in shaping the political traditions of Muslim countries? Scholars have offered many potential explanations to these questions, three of which are negative feelings towards the West, economic development, and authoritarian leadership. Because most Muslim countries' historical experiences have been greatly impacted by the West, Muslims have developed negative feelings towards it. Western imperialism, war, exploitation, and political interference in the Middle East led to an entrenched feeling of distrust, fear, and insecurity. Because democracy is generally thought of as a product of the West, the countries of the Middle East have been reluctant to accept a Western democracy.

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One leading factor to the lack of democracy in the Muslim world is the presence of very powerful and hostile authoritarian regimes. In such cases, although the citizens yearn for democracy, the existing regime rejects democracy to protect its power and interests. Therefore, some will argue that the focus of democratic study should not be on cultural preconditions, but rather on key social and political actors. This is important for the Muslim world including Malaysia which is haunted by authoritarian regimes and dictatorships. "People in Islamic societies tend to have a propensity towards democracy but what makes it less possible for them to achieve democratic political governance is the nature of the over stated, overblown and over stretched state structure and the heavy-handed authoritarian regimes (in most cases) in power at present."

Conclusion

Even though the politics of Malays has gone through a long evolution process since then, the discussion on hegemony will not stop as it is. The sentiments of loyalty, devotion, faithful and others have formed a stronger bond in ensuring that the leadership of Malays is not challenge by any parties. The discussion on hegemony has shown that it is not suitable and relevant anymore to be practiced. However, the hegemony practiced has its own pro and contra towards society development and smoothen the administration of a country. The most important aspects chosen by the government will determine whether

the hegemony practiced is a burden or not. The Malay traditional government has placed an importance in the Malay traditional monarchy as it involves with the absorbance of Islam in the system itself. Now, on the contrary, the approach used by the Malaysian government has put an importance on the people's unity that may guarantee the well-being of the country. This seems to connect closely to the religion of Islam because Islam encourages the Muslims to be united not only between Muslims but also with non-Muslims. This exceptional hegemony approach in the Malay administration does not only look like Gramsci political hegemony theory, but also unique and special.

The rights of freedom that is always a polemic and politicised by certain parties in Malaysia are the rights of the press. The parties concerned have thrown various accuses that Malaysia does not practice the rights of press freedom. They accused that Malaysia does not adhere to the principal freedom, which are stated in the Declarations of Human Rights. They also publicized in intensity the freedom of the press ranking in Malaysia, which was given out by various international bodies to support the accusation that Malaysia is not press-friendly, and using it for their own safety. Ironically, the majority group of accusers is not of journalism background. They were also not professional in discussing the issues.

A different story, however, is playing out in the Malay part of archipelagic Southeast Asia. Having campaigned on the issue, Malaysia's new government has cancelled several projects it deemed threatening to state sovereignty, while the Indonesian opposition has vowed to review China's Belt and Road project if elected in the 2019 presidential elections. Malaysia is careful to maintain good relations with the West and India, as well as their trading partners in the Middle East. Much of the world may be having its doubts about democracy. Even in the Asia Pacific's veteran democracy Australia, a recent poll showed that a third of the population favoured an authoritarian or "strongman" type leader. But in the Muslim Malay world, it looks like democracy is here to stay. It is said that the Pakatan Harapan's good days are now gone. But what is even more important is that all those factors that helped Pakatan Harapan win 5.5 million votes no longer exist. In just one year all those 'contributing factors' are gone. Nothing of what Pakatan Harapan said will happen if they won the general election happened. And if the general election was held again today, the result is going to be entirely different from May last year.

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