

Malaysia

Rice

The territories in the Malaysian peninsula joined together in 1948 and negotiated independence from Great Britain in 1957. Since then, Geddes has classified Malaysia as a single party state, under the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). It is important to note that UMNO is actually the most powerful member of a coalition known as the Alliance, which also contains the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC). Together, the three parties represent the major ethnic groups in Malaysia and have been in power continually since 1957 (Hooker, 204).

Based on our coding rules, we code Malaysia as a parliamentary democracy from independence in 1957 until 1968 (Bhopal 1999). Note that Cheibub et al. do not code Malaysia as democratic and Geddes codes Malaysia as a single-party regime under the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) for the entire period under observation. Upon independence, the leader of UMNO, Tunku Abdul Rahman became Prime Minister. He held this position until 1969 (except for a few months in 1959 when Tun Abdul Razak [UMNO] served as PM), when race riots (incited by elections in which the Alliance did poorly) led to the declaration of the establishment of the National Operations Council, with the Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, running it. This severely curtailed his own powers, however, Rahman remained in office until September 22, 1970, when he resigned. The office of prime minister then passed to Tun Abdul Razak. This is not a SOLS change. Razak held office until his death in 1976, at which point his deputy, Dato Hussein Onn became Prime Minister. This is not a SOLS change.

In 1981, Hussein Onn resigned, citing ill health (Hooker, 240). The UMNO General Assembly then elected Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamed as the party leader, which also made him Prime Minister (Hooker, 240). He was in office until 2003, when he stepped down and was replaced by his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Abdullah called elections in 2004, which he won with an overwhelming majority (Hooker, 240). He remained in office until 2009, which is outside of the scope of this study. There were no SOLS changes during the 1957-2008 period.

References

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