

## **CHAPTER II**

### **POLITICAL DEMOGRAPHY IN MALAYSIA**

Malaysia is a developing country with multi-ethnic society in Southeast Asia with 29.3 million populations consists of three main races living together namely Malays, Chinese and India Malaysia. The largest ethnic in Malaysia is Malay about 50.1% of the total Malaysian population. Generally Malay ethnic is more dominant in political contestation in Malaysia. The characteristics of Malay ethnic are Moslem, using Malay language, and practicing Malay cultures and traditions.

The second largest ethnic in Malaysia is Chinese. About 22.6% of the Malaysian population from Chinese ethnic. Chinese ethnic have been in Malaysia for centuries because of immigration, and the peak of immigration happened in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Chinese ethnic dominate in economy, business, and trade like overseas Chinese in other countries. Generally, Chinese ethnic religion is Taoism or Buddhism. Malaysia Chinese spoke several Chinese dialects, yet most of them are Mandarin.

And the third largest ethnic in Malaysia is India. About 6.7% of the Malaysian population from India. Tamils, Punjabis and Telugus included as Indian subgroups. 86% of Malaysian Indians are Tamils, began arriving in the 18th and 19th Centuries during the colonial era. Indian ethnic have dominant in Labor. Its happened when they migrated to construct railways, to work in plantations, and

rubber and oil palm estates. Majority religion of Indian ethnic in Malaysia is Hinduism (Richburg, Malaysia's Ethnic Chinese, Indians Fear Cultural Domination by Malays, 1987).

A system of conviction and behaviors that admit and respects the presence of all various groups in an organization or a society is Multiculturalism (Khader, 2012). Multiculturalism unites human beings from diverse of culture to allow them to achieve their fullest potential. The understanding of other cultures is very important, and it may help to maintain stability in society. High level of understanding and respect from other cultures is needed to live in a multicultural society. People should understand and respect each other. Once the social fabric is broken, it cannot easily be repaired together again.

Malaysia was simply homogenous until the early of the nineteenth century, as far as the demographic distribution was concerned. The indigenous people, it was a singular society of Malays. The multiculturalism in Malaysia happened since the colonialism era. The history of ethnic pluralism began when British colonilization in 1726, and their "divide and conquer" policy laid the foundation for communal division in Malaysia (Hazri Jamil Razak& Nordin Abd., 2010). British encouraged migration during the colonial rule. The migrant mostly from India and China that make Malaysia changed the nature of their ethnically homogeneous society to a more pluralistic society. These three ethnics use different traditions and cultures, and generally stated that they have different religions, value systems, codes of dress and thought.

These cultures have also laced together to make Malaysia's contemporary and uniquely various heritage although each of these ethnic groups has its own culture, and has patiently maintained its traditions and society structures. Other groups (13%) that make up the population include the indigenous groups in the Sabah and Sarawak regions like the Dusunus, Kadazan, Ibans, Muruts, Penans, Bidayauhus, just to name a few and Eurasians.

#### **A. History of Migration in Malaysia**

From human history, migration of human beings is a precondition of human development and progress. Human being would be condemned to an existence worse than that of the animals without migration. Even animals migrate to find a better life. The first humans migrated out of Southern Africa thousands of years ago and spread entire the world and people have been moving about since then. Factors like poverty, discrimination, wars, and for political or even religious is the reasons people migrate. Nowadays era, people often migrate for security, work and even for education opportunities (Team U. , Migration In Malaysia, 2015).

Free immigration and organized immigrant labor migration in Malaysia took place under the British colonial rule and administration in 19th century. The British invited labor from India, China and Indonesia to help British economic agenda of exploitation of natural resources through plantations and building infrastructures. It

is mainly because of immigrant labor supply is stable, sufficient and cheap. At the same time local labor lack of interested in particular sectors as migrant labor. Nevertheless, because of free immigration and economic problems in the home countries, many immigrant workers decided to settle permanently in Malaya (Hyoji, 2007).

### **1. Indian Migration**

The Indians had been arrived in Malaysia since 2000 years ago (Team T. C., 2017). Indians at Malacca, plays a vital role in Islamic religious and business. This people mostly came from Gujerati and got married with local Indian called 'Chitty' as one of local Indian society in Malaya. In 1860's there were more Indians live in Penang, Singapore, and Sebarang Perai working in coffee and sugar agricultures. In 1865 founded 12,700 Indians in Singapore and 15,200 people in Penang, Sebarang Perai and Malacca. The Indians labors are largely increased when the rubber estate rapidly start to plant more rubber trees in most of places like in Selangor, Perak, Negeri Sembilan and Johor. The Indians migration to Malaysia can be categorized in three groups:

i. **Indian that migrates is prisoner under the British ruler**

They were forced labor to work at construction project areas such as railway stations, roads, bridges, and government buildings. It happened when British colonialized Malaysia.

ii. **Kangany system**

In this system, labors are not bonded with any contract however they have been charged to pay their own cost from India to Malaysia. There were one million Indian labors were carried to Malaysia through 'kangany system' before until in 1938 the system were prohibited.

iii. **Based on contract**

This system required Indian labors to work in three years contract period in Malaysia especially in agricultural sectors. Most of the Indian migrants are from Tamil, Telugu, Malayali, Punjabi, Pakistan, and Sinhala people.

There are some reasons why Indians were migrating to Malaysia. The migrant mostly faced economic difficulties in India. Many of farmers have lost their farmland due to natural disasters. Educated person were very hard to get job, however there were social caste problems and forced them to migrate to Malaysia. The rapid economic changes in Malaya demand more labors. The other reason is the encouragement from British government in India to work in civil service plantation, and construction. The Indians known has hardworking culture even under pressure situation (Balakrishnan, 2017).

## 2. Chinese Migration

The Chinese stayed in Malaysia since thousands of years before. They were living in cave at Gua Niah, Santubong and Kota Batu at Sarawak. At 15<sup>th</sup> century Chinese were settled in Malacca, about 2500 Chinese people on 1750's. In 1700's about 1000 Chinese people were in Johor Lama moreover 3000 Chinese people live in Penang. In the middle of 19th century there were more Chinese people, about 40.000 Chinese people in Perak Kelian Putih, 10.000 Chinese people at Sungai Unjung that worked in tin mining. There were about 100,000 Chinese in Johor. This migration happened because of the encouragement from Temenggung Ibrahim to increase the development of agriculture

There were many reasons, that caused a large move of Chinese people to Malaysia and was not the only reason that their indeed to work in Malaysia. There were some factors that led migration to Malaysia:

### i. China's internal factors

As we know China is the biggest population in the world (Team I. W., 2017), as well as vulnerable country with natural disasters and limited of natural resources. Moreover during Manchu Dynasty, political instability occurred especially in Southern China. Some local people resistance against the Kingdom because of the Manchu's policy that considered them as foreigners.

## ii. Job Vacancy under British Colonialism

Plenty of labors were needed to work because Malaysia was development mining and rubber industry. Moreover the migration process became so easy because the rapid change in transportation system. Even more the political situation in Malaysia is stable under British colonial rule.

Malaysian workers moving from rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban areas and immigrant workers have an impact on Malaysia's rapid economic development since independence. Mostly they came from Southeast Asian countries. The "push" and "pull" factors at the international level in the region also caused workers migration to Malaysia for employment. The acceleration of economic development programs and high economic growth in Malaysia in the last three decades have contributed to the influx of immigrant workers to fulfill labor shortage in Malaysia.

## **B. Immigration and Population in Malaysia**

There is no cultural homogeneity in Malaysian society with each ethnic group having their own religion, language, culture and customs (Ratnam, 1965). These various ethnic identities have shaped a multi-ethnic or pluralistic nature in Malaysian society.

	1995	%	2000	%	2005	%
Citizen	19.68	100.0	22.04	100.0	24.66	100.0
Total Population	20.68		23.27		26.04	
Malay/Bumiputera	12.47	63.3	14.56	66.1	16.59	67.3
Chinese	5.22	26.5	5.58	25.3	6.04	24.5
Indian	1.49	7.6	1.63	7.4	1.78	7.2
Others	0.50	2.6	0.27	1.2	0.25	1.0
Non-Citizen	1.00		1.23		1.38	

(Source: Malaysia, 2001a, 2002a & 2002b)

### **Figures 3: Number of population in Malaysia by ethnic (1995-2005)**

From above figure demonstrates that in 1995-2005 the majority of population in Malaysia is from Malay with 63.3% in 1995 then increase slightly to 66.1% in 2000 and increase to 67.3% in 2005. It is quite different with Chinese and Indian that slightly decreases. Population of Chinese ethnic in 1995 is 26.5% then decrease to 25.3% in 2000 and 24.5% in 2005. Indian ethnic population in 1995 is 7.6% then decrease to 7.4% in 2000 and 7.2% in 2005.

Country of Origin	Year			
	1999	2002	2005	2008
<b>Indonesia</b>	269,194 (65.7)	788,221 (73.8)	1,211,584 (66.7)	1,085,658 (52.6)
<b>Bangladesh</b>	110,788 (27.0)	82,642 (7.7)	55,364 (3.0)	316,401 (15.3)
<b>Thailand</b>	2,130 (0.5)	20,599 (1.9)	5,751 (0.3)	21,065 (1.0)
<b>Philippines</b>	7,299 (1.8)	21,234 (2.0)	21,735 (1.2)	26,713 (1.3)
<b>Pakistan</b>	2,605 (0.6)	2,000 (0.2)	13,297 (0.7)	21,278 (1.0)
<b>Others</b>	17,644 (4.3)	152,833 (14.3)	507,507 (28.0s)	591,481 (28.7)
<b>Total</b>	<b>409,660</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>1,067,529</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>1,815,238</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>2,062,596</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

(Source) Ministry of Home Affairs, Malaysia, 2008.

**Figures 4: Number of of migrant workers in Malaysia by country of origin  
(1999-2008)**

From the above figure depicts, mostly the migration since 1999 until 2008 the biggest migrant come from Indonesia followed by Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, and the Philippines. Indonesia migrant workers since 1999 have increased from 269.194 people migrant to Malaysia in 1999, but in 2002 the number has increased to 788.211 and reaches peak nearly 1.211.584 in 2005 and decrease in 2008 by 1.085.656 migrants. The number of migrant workers from Bangladesh and Thailand was fluctuated. The number of migrant in 1999 is 2,130 then increased in 2002 with 20,599 migrants after that decrease to 5,751 in 2005 and increased again to 21,065 in

2008. In 1999 Bangladesh contributed about 110.788, but decrease in 2002 (82.645), 2005 (55.364), and increase significantly in 2008 about 316.401. Philippines and Pakistan always increase year by year.

From above table it can be concluded that mostly the immigrant from neighboring countries with same characteristic such as ethnic, language, and religion. Indonesia has a similarity with Malaysia in terms of ethnic, language, and the religion. Philippines also has been favored by Malaysian due to the English skills. Thailand has similar religion and culture with Malaysia namely Buddhism. Bangladesh and Pakistan also have similar ethnics with India in Malaysia. From above data depicts that the Malaysian flexible society have attracted immigrants to come to Malaysia. It made migrants felt comfortable and easy to adjust with local cultures in Malaysia.

### **C. Pull and Push Factor**

The factors behind the harmonies of multiculturalism society in Malaysia that attract foreign workers to come:

#### **1. Tolerance**

Tolerance is the ability or willingness to accept something, in particular the existence of behavior, opinion and tradition that one does not necessarily

agree with. In this case local people in Malaysia respect with the new tradition, behavior, religion that immigrant brought. Tolerance and respect are two important words that should be remembered in the mind of a multi-religious, multicultural, and multi linguistic society. One should not only preach tolerance but try, on many possible opportunities, to put into practice the spirit of tolerance. Without the practical application of the spirit of tolerance and mutual respect for one another, the ugly venom of discrimination, taunt and despise would pour forth in jets. This, in turn, would ruin the tranquility and peace of the society and the nation (Agong, 2017).

## **2. Linguistic Affiliation**

Malay became Malaysia's official language in 1967 and has been institutionalized. Even though English is also widely spoken because of the British colonial influence in Malaysia, the Austronesian language has a reputable history as a lingua franca entire the region. Along with English and Malay other languages are also popular such as Indian Malaysians speak Tamil and numerous languages flourish among aboriginal groups in the peninsula, mainly in Sarawak and Sabah, many Chinese Malaysians speak some combinations of Hokkien, Cantonese, and/or Mandarin. The Malaysian government recognizes this multilingualism through many things such as

television news broadcasts in English, Malay, Tamil, and Mandarin. The rapid industrialization has maintained the importance of English and solidified it as the language of business (Team C. a., 2006).

The politics of Malaysia is based on a federal constitutional monarchy, which every area named as a state. King is the head of state and the Prime Minister is the head of government. Nowadays the King of Malaysia is Sultan Muhammad V and the Prime Minister is Najib Razak. Federal legislative power is vested in the federal parliament and the 13 state assemblies. Executive power is exercised by the federal government and the 13 state governments. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature, even though the executive maintains a certain level of impact in the rapture of judges to the courts (Team W. M., 2016).

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country that has been successful in maintaining its racial conflicts. Malays and followed by Indians, Chinese is the majority ethnic in Malaysia. Government's wants to unite all the ethnics under one group then it is named Malayan Union (Team M. H., 2012). Through Malayan Union, the government expects that every individual will have a feeling of similarity or equality as a nation state and not to individually accustom by ethnic. Therefore, Malaysian Nation is a concept that represents all ethnic in Malaysia under one nation. Yet, politics in Malaysia is facing an exacerbated unity challenge, especially in Malay politics.

### 3. The Alliance

The alliance is the coalition in the newly autonomous Malaya was formed based on the concept of consensus government. Thus, the government of Malaysia used three big integrated parties that represent Malay, Chinese and Indian. The coalition party consist of UMNO (United Malay National Organization), MIC (Malaysian Indian Congress and MCA (Malaysia Chinese Association)) to reduce racial issues. Every party have their own job, UMNO generally control the government of Malaysia then MCA control the economy of Malaysia, and MIC control the labor in Malaysia (Suhana Saad, Lyndon N, S. Selvadurai, M. S. Sarmila, R. Zaimah & A. M. Azima, 2013).

#### i. UMNO

UMNO is the dominant group in the Alliance, whose founder Datuk Onn had been replaced by Tunku Abdul Rahman. The ability to take advantages from all levels of Malay opinion in opposition to the Malayan Union through government service employees who were able to mobilize Malays wielding positions in many state administrative structures is the reason behind UMNO's early success.

There were other more radical organizations which compete for Malay devotion while the majority of Malays supported UMNO. Party Islam Se-

Tanah Melayu (PAS, or the Pan-Malay Islamic Party) is one group which was more successful in its challenge to UMNO was. As part of UMNO, it had earlier been known as the All-Malaya Islamic Association but later adopted the name PAS in order to compete as a separate political party in the 1955 federal elections. The basis of PAS is Malay-dominated society and eager to the preservation of Malay privileges especially in the northern states (Kelantan, Kedah, Terengganu). In 1955 PAS obtained high reputable and political support especially during 1959 federal elections under the leadership of Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmy (Hays, Politics and Political Parties in Malaysia, 2015).

## **ii. MCA**

The second major party in the alliance that expected to achieve and sustain the protection of Chinese interests by maintaining friendly relations with UMNO is MCA. Originally, its leadership composed a small Western-educated business and professional Chinese class. Dispensing patronage to the MCA's Chinese-speaking state leaders, the English-speaking MCA elite was able to reach out to Chinese guilds, clan associations and trade unions. Furthermore, these men has solid platform to develop a working relationship with leaders from other ethnic groups in

the Alliance because of their education experience in English schools. MCA in Malaysia nowadays totally controlling the Malaysia economy.

In 1958, a radical Chinese-educated communal group began to play a more active role in MCA politics. They urged to improve Chinese prosperity amid of bad relations with UMNO. A third small group, which emerged in 1957, got support from young left-wing Western –educated individuals and its leader, Dr. Lim Chong Eu replaced by Tan Cheng Lock in the following year. Despite appointment of continued co-operation, the close personal friendship which had previously existed between the leaders of UMNO and MCA was now absent.

The 1959 ‘July Crisis’ was conflict period of UMNO-MCA relations. Because of the new citizenship laws, the Chinese electorate in 1959 had raised to 35.6% compared to the previous election which only 11.2%. However, the Alliance National Council had informally agreed to just 28 places for the MCA. The new MCA leadership reduced for an appropriation of 40 positions on the Alliance ticket and further urged that Mandarin should be acknowledged as an official language. As a result, the Alliance became much more efficiently according to the Tunku’s leadership. The MCA’s claim to be an advocate of its group’s interests which had been significantly undermined and many disappointed Chinese

was seek to other forms of leadership that could uphold their rights (Fee, 2010).

### **iii. MIC**

The MIC was granted only 2 seats in comparison to 15 and 35 positions in the 1955 elections that held by MCA and UMNO respectively, that the status of MIC is the weakest member of the Alliance. Significantly, the MIC had yet to attest that it could galvanize the support of the small Indian electorate, which was still divided along cultural and ethnic lines. Moreover, the educated Hindu elite and Indian trade unionists commonly supported non-communal parties rather than the MIC. Nor had the Hindu-dominated MIC been able to garner support with the mass of Indian laborers, a majority of whom were Tamil. MIC's felt lackluster performance in championing Indian interests and the Tamil press heavily criticized the UMNO-MCA merger.

The capability of the MIC to cooperate with the Alliance in the early years was largely due to a close personal relations between the V.T. Sambanthan, MIC president (1954-1973) and Tunku. In fact, the bargaining power was limited due to the small number of Indian electorate

which only 7.4% in 1959 of the total Malaysian electoral. Nowadays, MIC in Malaysia controlling the labor of the country (Kailasam, 2015).