POLS 442
Politics in South Asia

II-B Malaysia
Part II

Malaysia’s semi-democracy

- Non-participatory society: cost of democracy is low for elites
  - Friction development as a result of economic development
- UMNO election rules
  - Arbitrary use by Mahathir
- Semi-democracy
  - In the UMNO

Elite Competition

- Benefit expansion phase
  - Elite cohesion
- Non-benefit expansion phase
  - Elite competition
- Mid-1970s, Prime Minister Tun Razak
  - The New Order Group
    - Market liberalization, economic development
  - Old guard
    - Challenging leadership position in UMNO elections
Mahathier and competition

- In the 1980s, Prime Minister Mahathier
  - Privatization and cutting spending
  - Skewed distribution of benefit
  - Team A vs. Team B
    - Mahathier: dubious vote count, etc → arresting opposition members
- In 1990 elections
  - Razaleigh preparing to challenge
  - Support from middle- and small-size businesses
  - Economic recovery: patronage by UMNO leadership
- Anwar, finance minister’s gain of power in the mid-1990s
  - Challenging Deputy Ghafar Baba
  - More sophisticated method

Elite-mass relations

- Opposition parties’ autonomy, relatively fair general election process
- Opposition parties blocked from circulating their newspapers to the public
- Mass media controlled by the government
- Opposition parties gain seats but not majority
- Gerrymandering and malapportionment

---

Election results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PKR</th>
<th>BN</th>
<th>PSDB</th>
<th>others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hsieh and Newman, eds., How Asia Votes, p. 226