MALAYSIA DEMOCRACY FORUM

"Charting the Future of Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia"

30 March 2021
InterContinental Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia’s political landscape has seen a lot of changes since its independence in 1957. Parliamentary democracy has been instrumental in keeping the country’s government in check, and in providing a system of accountability that gives power to voters in deciding who leads the country. Throughout the decades however, this system has been jeopardised by corruption and party hopping, which has greatly corroded accountability in the country. As a former colony of Great Britain, Malaysia shapes its law according to the English Common Law. In the English Common Law, political party members are not obliged to follow the party line, and can opt out of the party that brought them to power. However, they need to vacate their seats as they won it through the party ticket. In Malaysia, we follow the same principle but unfortunately not the latter part, which gives rise to a plethora of incidences where party members freely hop to different parties but still retain their parliamentary seats. This has been the reason for so much uncertainty in Malaysia for the past year until it came to a head recently in 2020. Are we sliding downwards in our bid for a healthy and accountable parliamentary system? What needs to be fixed?

This one-day Forum is a landmark event whose objective is to increase the quality of discourse in parliament, one that is befitting Malaysia’s aspiration to become a mature and efficient parliamentary democracy, and to increase the voice and participation of the youth in our political process in order to do away with racial politics that has stifled our country’s progress for decades. The Forum will consist of keynote speeches and panel discussions by national leaders and eminent speakers, from diverse spectrums of the political landscape in Malaysia.
8.00am – 9.00am  FORUM REGISTRATION

9.00am – 10.00am  WELCOMING REMARKS
CHEAH CHYUAN YONG
Chairman, International Strategy Institute

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
YB Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim
President, People’s Justice Party (PKR)

10.00am – 11.30am  ARE POLITICAL PARTIES ESSENTIAL IN A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY?
The root of the recent problem in Malaysian politics is the incessant party hopping that has reduced party manifestos and constituency accountability to paper promises. Can elected politicians still be trusted? Is party politics still important in the development of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia? Are recall elections the most effective instrument to penalise party hoppers?

11.30am – 12.15pm  SPECIAL DIALOGUE WITH A POLITICAL LEADER
This is a special dialogue session with one of the most prominent political leaders in Malaysia and his view on the future of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia and the steps we can take to enhance it.

12.30pm – 1.00pm  SPECIAL LUNCHEON ADDRESS
"Charting the Future of Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia"
YB Dato’ Sri Mustapa bin Mohamed (TBC)
Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Economic Affairs)

1.00pm – 1.45pm  COMMUNITY POWER LUNCH

2.00pm – 3.15pm  PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN MALAYSIA - PERSPECTIVE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
Parliamentary democracy is a system that ensures accountability by the leaders who are chosen to serve the rakyat. Despite this principle, the system of accountability is not perfect, and the voices and aspirations of civil society are often not addressed. This session provides critical perspectives from civil society, representing people who are meant to be served under the parliamentary democratic system, and what are the fundamental changes that can be brought about to improve it.

3.15pm – 3.30pm  AFTERNOON BREAK

3.30pm – 4.30pm  FUNDING IN POLITICS
Funding is the bloodline of every political party in their bid to gain power through reaching out to electorates. The bigger the war chest, the more likely the reach and impact it has on the electorates. Hence funding can be a source of great debate as vested interests revolve around it. Should the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) be administered and disbursed by an independent third party and not susceptible to party alignments? Should parties be funded by federal and state coffers instead of elite donors?

4.30pm – 5.30pm  CLOSING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

5.30pm  End of Programme
ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY INSTITUTE (ISI)

The International Strategy Institute (ISI) is a not-for-profit organisation that helps connect governments and businesses across Asia. We stand for universal ethical business values such as equality, transparency, fair trade, and sustainable development.

Our dialogues, programmes, research and networking platforms, are designed to drive economic growth in the region. We aim to:

1. Build platforms for regional dialogue and networking opportunities that allow businesses, industry captains and governments to come together to drive economic growth of the region;

2. Provide timely research to keep our members and governments informed and updated on global trade and political issues that may have an impact on their operations;

3. Match businesses to the right investors and to ensure that the companies are paired with the right strategic investment partner.

4. Provide strategic platforms that connects governments, businesses, and civil society organisations (CSOs) around the region to conduct CSR programmes for community outreach and to give back to the community.

VISION AND MISSION

International Strategy Institute (ISI) aims to be the leading regional connector and networking platform for governments and businesses across Asia and the Pacific.

Through our networking events, conferences, and rigorously research publications, special dialogue with key decision maker within the government, captain of industries and NGOs, we hope to promote a robust Asian socioeconomic environment that is strategic, inclusive, thought provoking, innovative, and sustainable for all.

For further enquiries or registration please contact Normazida Abdul Majid at mazida@istrategyglobal.org
Tel: +603 2242 3799    Fax: +603 2242 3033
Please submit the reply slip via email to mazida@istrategyglobal.org or shima@istrategyglobal.org OR fax before 25 March 2021.
Tel: 03 2242 3799 Fax: 03 2242 3033
Dress code: Business Attire
The registration includes forum materials and a lunch.

PLEASE FILL IN BLOCK LETTER. ONE FORM PER PERSON.
THIS EVENT IS STRICTLY BY INVITATION, RSVP IS REQUIRED.

### PERSONAL DETAILS

[ ] Yes! I would like to attend the MALAYSIA DEMOCRACY FORUM.
30 March 2021 | InterContinental Kuala Lumpur

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### REPRESENTATIVE DETAILS

[ ] No, I am unable to attend the MALAYSIA DEMOCRACY FORUM but the following representative will attend on my behalf:

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[ ] No, I am unable to attend the MALAYSIA DEMOCRACY FORUM and there will be no representative.