American Foreign Policy Council

MALAYSIA

Malaysia has long been viewed as a developed, pro-Western, and moderate Muslim-majority country. In recent decades, however, the country as a whole has been experiencing a swing toward Islamic conservatism. This shift appears to be gaining momentum, as evidenced by the increasing popularity of sharia law in public discourse, the state-sanctioned suppression of civil rights and liberties in the name of Islam, the inability of civil courts to stand up against controversial sharia court decisions, increasing cases of moral policing by Islamic religious authorities (including policing of non-Muslims in some instances), and more frequent references to the "Islamic state."[1] This increasing visibility of Islam in Malaysian society and politics is driven not only by the Islamist opposition

party Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (Islamic Party of Malaysia, or PAS),
but also by the United Malays National Organization (UMNO),
whose members were apparently the architects of Malaysia's brand of
progressive, moderate Islam.[2] Alternative actors such as nongovern-
mental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups likewise are
increasingly participating in the politicization of Islam in Malaysia
today, at times even eclipsing mainstream political parties in terms
of intensity.

Islam in Malaysia is arguably fragmented and variegated
in both substance and expression, with religious vocabulary and
idioms being mobilized by the state, opposition forces, and a wide
array of civil society groups. While Malaysian Islamists nominally
operate within the boundaries of mainstream political processes in
Malaysia, they also work to define those boundaries. Moreover, even
as the Muslim opposition attempts to shed its doctrinaire image in
pursuit of an agenda of reform, the "moderate" UMNO-led govern-
ment has pursued an agenda that has resulted in the constriction of
the country's cultural and religious space.

ISLAMIST ACTIVITY

PAS - Parti Se-Islam Malaysia (Pan Malaysian Islamic Party)

PAS was established as the Pan Malaysian Islamic Party in
1951 by dissidents from UMNO's Bureau of Religious Affairs, and
has participated in every Malaysian parliamentary election since
1955.[3] Since its inception, PAS has advocated for the promotion
of Malay interest and protection of Muslim rights. In its early days,
PAS maintained a more rural constituency, particularly among
Arabic and religiously educated Malays.[4] By 1982, however, PAS's
political stance was infused with Islamist aspirations. During this
time, old-guard ethno-nationalists were voted out via party elections
and replaced by *ulama* (religious scholars) leadership. This trans-
formation coincided with burgeoning sentiments among Malay-
Muslims that Islam is *addin* (a way of life), and had to be accorded
greater prominence not only in their personal lives, but in the pub-
lic sphere as well.[5] The global resurgence of Islamic consciousness
during the 1970s and early 1980s, coupled with the religious lead-
ership epitomized by the likes of Fadzil Noor, Abdul Hadi Awang
and Nakhaie Ahmad, contributed to the party's pronounced Islamic

agenda.[6] The resulting public battle between PAS and UMNO that has taken place since hinges on the discourse of morality, with PAS admonishing UMNO for marginalizing the position of Islamic laws in the Federation of Malaya and the political leadership's failure to observe Islamic ethics and morals. From the outset, the party's goal was a *sharia*-based state in which economic, political and social systems conformed to Islamic values.

A steady expansion of PAS's support base in states such as Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis and in the universities throughout the country in the 1990s indicated the party's rising popularity and the appeal of *sharia*-centered politics. In fact, PAS's commitment to its religious agenda has prevented the party from fruitful cooperation with secular opposition allies.[7] The party's outlook is buttressed by its unyielding belief that the Islamic state is both a viable and necessary alternative to the UMNO-dominated secular state. Since 1990, when it was returned to power in the state of Kelantan, PAS has presented draft proposals to the parliament for the introduction of *hudud* criminal law in Kelantan.[8] Similar efforts were made after the PAS electoral triumph in Terengganu in 1999. However, as criminal law falls under the jurisdiction of the federal and not the *sharia* courts, the motions have been withdrawn on both occasions.

A turning point in the party's Islamic-state agenda came in the run-up to the March 2008 elections. Given the party's subsequent dismal showing in the 2004 elections, PAS leaders promised to soften the party's stance on the Islamic-state issue.[9] This shift has been echoed by ex-deputy prime minister of Malaysia and current PKR adviser, Anwar Ibrahim, who claimed that "PAS's intention to establish an Islamic state is no longer an issue."[10] In the 2008 election, PAS distanced itself from the Islamic-state objective and attempted to leverage the consternation of Malaysia's ethnic minorities in the wake of UMNO's rallying call of Malay primacy.[11]

In an obvious effort to woo non-Muslim votes, PAS leaders have made clear that their election campaign at the national level will focus on a manifesto that holds out the promise of a welfare state system, known as "*negara kebajikan*," accessible to all Malaysians.[12] Components of this agenda include populist initiatives such as free education, free water utilities throughout the coun-

try, cheaper fuel and health subsidies.[13]   Furthermore, wealth and income distribution will be pursued through a taxation policy that focuses on large businesses in order to offset subsidies earmarked for the poor.[14]   Not only will the welfare-state concept dull the edges of its Islamist agenda, it can in the larger picture enhance the appeal of the party across the electorate, particularly since specific reference has also been made to issues of meritocracy and the importance of the presence of non-Malay ministers.[15]   Indeed, these were important developments in ensuring non-Muslim support for PAS in the 2008 elections.

Radical Salafi groups
Malaysia is home to a pair of notable radical Islamist groups who adhere broadly to the exclusionary Salafi strain of political Islam:

The *KMM (Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia/Kumpulan Militan Malaysia,* or *Malaysian Mujahidin Group/Malaysian Militant Group)*, an alleged underground militant group, was uncovered through an attempted bombing of a shopping mall in Jakarta in August 2001. The group is reported to favor the overthrow of the Mahathir government and the creation of a regional Islamic state.[16]
Subsequent investigations revealed that the KMM was apparently formed on October 12, 1995 by Zainon Ismail, and had its roots in *Halaqah Pakindo*, a clandestine movement formed in 1986 as an alumni association for Malaysian graduates from religious institutions in Pakistan, India, and Indonesia.[17]   It was later made known by the government that eight of the ten KMM detainees were PAS members.[18]   The Malaysian government has alleged that, although Nik Adli Abdul Aziz is allegedly the elected leader of the KMM, real leadership for the group flows through Abu Bakar Bashir and Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin), the spiritual and operational leaders of the Indonesia-based regional terrorist network *Jemaah Islamiyah*.[19]   No evidence is publicly available to corroborate these conclusions, however.
KMM has differed from other militant organizations in Malaysia in terms of its reach. Though established in Malaysia, several sources have indicated that KMM enjoys close links with

Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia.[20] Nevertheless, the exact nature of this relationship remains murky. Despite inconclusive evidence, Malaysian intelligence sources also revealed that KMM allegedly participated in religiously inspired riots in Maluku and Ambon in 2000, and supplied arms to radical Muslims involved in those incidents.[21] Subsequent arrests found leaders having in their possession "documents on guerrilla warfare and map reading, along with studies of militant groups in the Philippines, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Indonesia."[22] In response, Malaysian security forces launched a nationwide operation to detain remaining KMM members. Eventually, up to seventy KMM members were detained without trial under the ISA (Internal Security Act) for allegedly trying to overthrow the government through violent means in the name of *jihad*.[23]

Al-Maunah (Brotherhood of Inner Power) was a non-governmental organization involved in the teaching of martial arts, particularly the development of one's inner powers and the practice of Islamic traditional medicine. At its most prolific, it is said to have more than 1,000 members in Malaysia and overseas, particularly in Tripoli, Libya.[24]

      In June 2000, the *Al-Maunah* movement managed to successfully carry out an arms heist from two Malaysian Armed Forces military camps in Perak. The heist served as a major source of embarrassment for the government given the manner in which members of the group managed to penetrate the camp's security infrastructure by dressing up in military fatigues and driving jeeps painted in camouflage green, indicating the likelihood that the heist was an inside job.[25] According to police reports, the group had at least several hundred members led by a former army corporal, Mohammad Amin Razali. Several other sources revealed that civil servants, security services personnel, and even some UMNO members numbered among its ranks.[26] Upon ascertaining *Al-Maunah's* responsibility for the arms heist, Malaysian security forces embarked on a high-profile operation against the organization's camp in Sauk, Perak in July 2000 where nineteen members were eventually captured. Apprehended members of *Al-Maunah* were subsequently charged with treason and plotting to overthrow the government, with the

intention of establishing an Islamic state.

It is important to note that both KMM and *Al Maunah* cite local issues as primary causes of grievances, pursuing a predominantly domestic political agenda. For example, the *Al-Maunah* perpetrators demanded for the resignation of Prime Minister Mahathir and his Cabinet while in the case of the KMM, its three key objectives - "to seek religious purity among Malay-Muslims", "to ensure that PAS' political struggle was maintained and encouraged", and "to implement *shari'a* within Malaysia", all pertained to domestic political concerns, despite efforts on the part of the government to link them to a transnational terrorist agenda.[27]

Additionally, evidence linking these militant movements with external organizations remains nebulous and inconclusive. Although these domestic movements share some degree of ideological affinity as well as rudimentary contacts with external organizations, they are purportedly not under the control of external organizations.[28] Therefore, despite attempts to associate KMM with external groups and regional objectives such as the grandiose vision of a *Darul Islam Nusantara* in the region, no mention was made about links with either *Jemaah Islamiyah* or al-Qaeda in the formal charges against the organization. KMM was charged under the ISA solely for its attempt to overthrow the government.[29]

ISLAMISM AND SOCIETY

With the changing complexion of PAS, and the UMNO-led government's systematic Islamization of the bureaucracy, social consciousness and political discourse in Malaysia has been catapulted to a new, more religious dimension. An immediate outcome of this process was the intensification of the UMNO–PAS competition where the focus was on linking credibility and legitimacy to Islam. However a concurrent Islamic discourse rooted in an increasingly vibrant civil society sphere that encompassed NGOs as well as alternative expressions of Islamic consciousness, namely alternative media sources beyond the mainstream government-controlled channels, and the Internet, also emerged to add to the dynamics of Malaysian politics. Even as the heavily contested politics of UMNO and PAS began to converge, a parallel form of civic activism was

emerging, which banded together not just political parties but also professional organizations, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and religious institutions.

It appears that NGO activism in Malaysia usually peaks during periods of major social upheaval that occurs on an otherwise comparatively peaceful sociocultural environment. For instance, the dakwah phenomenon that emerged in the early 1970s spawned a number of Islamist NGOs such as ABIM and *Al Arqam*, the *Reformasi* movement of the late 1990s launched a new generation of civil society groups and rejuvenated more established groups. Lately, the issues of apostasy, religious freedom, and the sanctity of the *shari'a* have spurred another round of NGO political and discursive activism that has challenged the hegemony of the state along with the policies of the opposition PAS. Muslim and non-Muslim groups that extend across the political spectrum have in their own way, spoken to, for, and against the positions and policies of UMNO as well as PAS, at times compelling these mainstream political parties to negotiate their politics and recalibrate their narratives.

Islamic NGOs and civil society organizations are not the sole challengers of the religiopolitical agenda of both UMNO and PAS. Considering the demographic realities of Malaysia, any debate on Islamism would certainly elicit responses from the non-Muslim community as well. This has certainly been the case in recent times, where non-Muslims' have accelerated concerns for their place in Malaysian society especially with the intensification of Islamist discourse and its increasingly hegemonic nature. The Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Sikhism (MCCBCHS) is an example of a non-Muslim interfaith organization that seeks to enhance dialogue and cooperation not only among Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs, but also between these communities and the Muslims in Malaysia. Since 2001, MCCBCHS has been leading an effort driven by the non-Muslim community to establish an Inter-Religious Council (IRC) that would encourage dialogue across religious boundaries. In particular, MCCBCHS felt that the "proper procedures" regarding marriage, divorce, and child custody issues relating to converts

to Islam required clarification from Islamic clerics.[30] The group believed that there were "several gray areas in this matter, which has caused much emotional suffering and confusion for family members of converts," aside from the tension it placed on intercommunal relations.[31]

In Malaysia, civil society groups are basically popular discourse in its more organized and mobilized form. Conversely, cyberspace and various alternative media sources are the new outlets and pathways of political expression that take Islamist debates deeper into Malaysian society.[32] Controversies related to various judicial rulings on the matter of apostasy, declarations by Malay-Muslim political leaders that Malaysia is an Islamic state, and the government's apparent intolerance of open discussions on the "sensitive" issue of Malay-Muslim rights and primacy, have been the primary driving factors behind the increasingly vital role these new avenues play in the Malaysian political scene by providing a forum for contrarian views, or for supporting the government's policies couched as a defence of the faith. Weblogs (henceforth referred to as blogs), chat rooms, and listserves have interestingly been shown to socially (re)construct agendas and offer interpretive frames as a focal point, thus contributing to the shaping and constraining of larger political debate.[33]

It can be argued that in general one would find, within the increasingly intense discursive arena of cyberspace, a noticeable schism between the opinions and perspectives that can be found on Malay-language blogs and English-language blogs, with regards to recent Islamic state declarations and high-profile *murtad* (apostasy) cases. While individuals from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds comfortably delve in English-language blogs, Malay-language blogs seem largely monopolized by Malay-Muslims.[34] Another discernible trend is that regardless of ethnicity and religion, there is a general consensus on English-language blogs in relation to the status of Malaysia as an Islamic state. However, a comparison of English and Malay blogs would show a clear disjuncture of perspectives on the issue. In the same vein, reactions to the high-profile apostasy cases that have emerged in recent years also show that sentiments are divided along religious lines, regardless of the language. Neverthe-

less, Malay and English blogs show an acute contrast in opinions, with the former expressing decidedly more conservative and exclusionary views and the latter purveying more openness to the idea of conversion out of Islam and religious freedom rights.

These trends, evident in virtual social networks, appear to emulate face-to-face patterns of physical interaction, wherein there is an inclination to communicate and associate (by virtue of participants leaving comments and linking one's blog to another) with like-minded individuals that hold generally compatible sentiments on any given set of issues. For instance, the majority of Malay bloggers who show more accommodative tendencies also tend to express their opinions on English blogs, whereas champions of Malay-Muslim primacy usually confine their activities to Malay blogs. Comments in response to a blog post are also more often conciliatory rather than critical. Although virtual space allows for honest, open, anonymous exchange (that at times border on temerity), the impermeability of ideas between the English and Malay language blogs point to a possible latent desire in Malaysia to avoid dialogue, engagement, and bridging of opinions between conflicting mindsets as well as ideas.

These trends speak to larger shifts in the sentiments on the ground. Malaysian society on the whole has been experiencing a swing toward Islamic conservatism. This swing seems to be gaining momentum, as demonstrated by the increasing popularity of *sharia* in public discourse, state-sanctioned curtailment of civil rights and liberties in the name of Islam, the incapacity of civil courts to challenge controversial *sharia* court decisions, increasing incidences of moral policing by Islamic religious authorities (including policing of non-Muslims in some instances), and the alarming regularity of references to the "Islamic state." For example, a 2006 survey of 1000 Muslim respondents revealed that 7.7 percent wanted stricter Islamic laws in place, and 44 percent supported a more active role for state religious authorities to police morality.[35]

In spite of the vast array of channels for political expression, two trends are worth highlighting. First, while the number of ave-

nues for expression may have expanded, given the prevalence of entrenched views on the primacy of Islam among most Malay-Muslim civil society groups, NGOs, and bloggers, it is evident that the parameters of discourse have not changed significantly. Arguably too, there have been instances when Malay-Muslim popular opinion were more "fundamentalist" than either UMNO or PAS on matters such as moral policing, sanctity of the *sharia*, defense of the faith, and Malaysia's courting of the Islamic state ideal. Second, it is important to note that some of the most intense national debates spanning a range of issues at the heart of the rise of Islamism in Malaysia—namely apostasy, Islamic governance and government, and the sanctity of the constitution and of *sharia* law—are taking place not in the sphere of mainstream partisan politics but in cyberspace among ordinary citizens. This situation points to how Malaysian society is polarized over the question of Islam's salience as an ordering principle for law and politics; the discourse regarding apostasy legislation, where the gradual division of Malaysian society along ethnic and creedal lines becomes apparent, is a case in point.

ISLAMISM AND THE STATE

Islamization in Malaysia is essentially a social change phenomenon with significant political implications. It has been accelerated by the UMNO and PAS's search for an Islamic ideal that would translate into legitimacy, popularity, and electoral support. By placing greater significance on Islamic laws, values, and practices, the early 1980s saw UMNO and PAS enter a "race" to determine which of the two parties' vision of Islam was most successful in Malaysia.

When Mahathir Mohammad assumed office in July 1981, the global Islamic resurgence was at its peak. In an effort to build on this trend, Mahathir set out to Islamize the Malaysian government, enacting a number of policies to achieve these ends. This Islamization campaign was made public during the UMNO general assembly in 1982, when Mahathir announced that the party would embark on a new strategy aimed "to change the attitude of the Malays in line with the requirements of Islam in this modern age."[36]

One of the most important initial steps in Mahathir's Islamization

program was the winning over of Anwar Ibrahim, a popular and charismatic Islamist activist, and his followers, and their integration into the UMNO. Mahathir's overall Islamization strategy was linked to the creation of think tanks that would in turn churn out intellectual and ideological impetus for policy. Armed with the necessary knowledge and expertise to ensure that the state was "pro-Islam" while still modernizing the country – especially segments within the Malay community – without sacrificing Islamic values, the Mahathir administration was able to design and implement Islamization policies that would undercut and outbid PAS. Several institutions were either created or improved to serve in the Islamization of the bureaucracy. This strategy resulted in the creation of the ideological machinery that the state has since used to manage and harness Islamic discourse in Malaysia, disseminating an "official" position on intellectual, cultural, educational, and legal matters with regards to Islam.

The UMNO government not only ordered the restructuring (both in scale and in scope) of a range of Islamic institutions, it expanded the state bureaucracy to accommodate the return of a growing number of Malaysian students sent abroad on government scholarships during the Mahathir administration for degrees in Islamic studies, along with the graduates of local Islamic institutions as well. The government also transformed the operations of *sharia* courts and mosques, and reorganized banking structures, foundation and charity work, *zakat* collection, as well as educational institutions. Making religious knowledge an examinable subject in the mainstream school curriculum was one of the Mahathir administration's most significant and controversial endeavors. The Islamic Teachers Training College was established in 1982 to accommodate this change in syllabus. Another notable high point of Mahathir's enterprise of creating and restructuring Islamic institutions was the introduction to Islamic banking.[37] With the creation of an Islamic bank the larger objective of the Islamization of the economy was achieved; it was also an important expression of Mahathir's interpretation of Islamic values (*Nilai-nilai Islam*), whereby Malays can "seek wealth in a moral and legal way" and "obtain prosperity in this world and hereafter."[38]

At the same time, Mahathir worked actively to suppress other inter-pretations of political Islam at variance his own. Events like 1987's Operation Lallang, the banning of *Al Arqam* in 1994, and the arrests of several prominent political figures, particularly from PAS, dem-onstrate the Mahathir administration's use of the ISA to remove all perceived obstacles standing in the way of Mahathir's Islamization policies and broader political agenda, even when the threat of some of these obstacles were suspect.

In the process of Islamization, the question of *sharia* is bound to arise. The controversies linked to *hudud* law in Terengganu and apostasy law in Perlis bring into sharp focus unresolved structural tensions that exist in Malaysia related to the question of jurisdic-tion and enforcement powers over alleged wrongdoings that have a religious aspect. These tensions are apparent at two stages. In the first level, confusion is caused by the legal governance system, at times hybridized and at times parallel, revolving around the Malay-sian constitution and reinforced by the system of federalism that brings about a dispersal of power on the issue of the formulation of Islamic law. Essentially, states may have the power to formulate reli-gious laws, but these formulations require ratification by the federal Parliament for it to be codified as legally binding and enforced. The second equally confounding instance is the dynamic that defines the relationship between civil and Islamic law. In a 1988 constitutional amendment, Article 121 1(A) stipulated that federal high courts "shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any matter within the juris-diction of the *shari'a* courts." Criminal law falls into federal juris-diction, however the constitution is ambiguous in such a way that it assigns power to create and punish offenses against the laws of Islam through Schedule 9 List 11 Item 1, which has allowed many state religious authorities to interpret their jurisdiction expansively.

The boundaries of Muslim politics in Malaysia may seem straight-forward, with PAS the Islamist opposition on one end, demanding that Malaysia's public spaces be governed by *sharia*, and UMNO at the other end, the "secularist" Muslim government that is appar-ently set on restricting Islamism and keeping religion within the

private sphere. However this is but an illusion. As recent controversies over apostasy and the right of non-Muslims to use the word "Allah" go to show, differences between UMNO and PAS are not the least bit cast in stone, and PAS has begun taking inclusivist positions on issues relating to Islam even as UMNO has become discernibly strident and "fundamentalist" in its defence of the primacy and exclusive rights of Muslims. In other words, the track record of PAS is considerably more inconsistent than its strident and unwavering rhetoric of exclusivist Islamism of the early 1980s would admit. On the other hand, the "secularist" UMNO party harbors many Islamist tendencies as well. This trend was especially noticeable since the Mahathir administration, with many elements of a conservative and orthodox Islamic government put in place even as PAS wavered on its own visions of models of governance.

There are many questions left unanswered with regards to the lengths the state and federal governments are prepared to push the possibilities for Islamic governance in Malaysia's multicultural social landscape, especially when neither state nor federal authorities, nor civil or religious authorities, have been able to resolve the blatantly contradictory policies and the obvious discrimination that riddle both UMNO and PAS's vision of Islamic governance in Malaysia.

ENDNOTES

[1]For example, a recent survey of 1,000 respondents revealed that 77 percent wanted stricter Islamic laws in place, and 44 percent supported a more active role for state religious authorities to police morality. See Patricia Martinez, "Islam, Pluralism, and Conflict Resolution in Malaysia: The Case of Interfaith Dialogue," paper presented at the Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, San Francisco, California, April 6-9, 2006.

[2] Consider, for example, how former UMNO president and Malaysian prime minister Abdullah Badawi regularly made references to Islam in his public speeches, or how *Mingguan Malaysia* [Malaysia Weekly], a best-selling government-linked daily, has weekend columns offering advice on various matters pertaining to religion in everyday life. Malaysia has also regularly hit the country-level limit set by the Saudi government for Haj pilgrims, and there is now a three-year waiting list for Malaysians wanting to make the pilgrimage.

[3] Angel M. Rabasa, *Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorist* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2003), 39.

[4] Saliha Hassan, "Islamic non-governmental organizations." in Meridith L. Weiss and Saliha Hassan, eds., *Social Movements in Malaysia* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 98.

[5] Joseph Chinyong Liow, "Political Islam in Malaysia: Problematising Discourse and Practice in the Umno-PAS 'Islamisation Race,'" *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 42, no. 2 (July, 2004), 186.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibidem.

[8] See Joseph Chinyong Liow, *Piety and Politics: The Shifting Contours of Islamism in Contemporary Malaysia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 58-64.

[9] Beh Lih Yi, "PAS to 'soften' stance on Islamic state", *Malaysiakini*, January 20, 2005, http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/33013.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Azamin Amin, "*Hindraf: PAS kesal hak asasi rakyat dicabuli*" ("HINDRAF: PAS regrets human rights abuses"), *Harakah Daily*, November 25, 2007, http://www.harakahdaily.net/bm/index.php/utama/hindraf-pas-kesal-hak-asasi-rakyat-dicabuli.html. PAS was careful to warn, however, that it did not agree with all of Hindraf's demands either. See Dato' Seri Tuan Guru Abdul Hadi Awang, "*Hak berhimpun diakui, tetapi sebahagian tuntutan Hindraf melampau*" ("HINDRAF's right to assemble must be respected but some of its demands are unacceptable"), *Harakah Daily*, December 3, 2007, http://www.harakahdaily.net/bm/index.php/arkib-utama/hak-berhimpun-diakui-tetapi-sebahagian-tuntutan-hindraf-melampau.html.

[12] Basiron Abdul Wahab, "*Pilihan raya umum: Negara kebajikan,*

tabung biasiswa antara tawaran PAS" ("General elections: PAS offers a welfare state and bursary fund"), *Harakah Daily*, August 28, 2007, http://www.harakahdaily.net/bm/index.php/arkib-pahang-darul-makmur/pilihan-raya-umum-negara-kebajikan-tabung-biasiswa-antara-tawaran-pas.html.

[13] "*PAS mampu lahirkan negara kebajikan bila diberi peluang tadbir pusat*" ("PAS can establish welfare state if allowed to administer at the federal level"), *Harakah Daily*, January 22, 2008, www.harakahdaily.net/bm/index.php/arkib-kelantan-darul-naim/pas-mampu-lahir-kan-negara-kebajikan-bila-diberi-peluang-tadbir-pusat.html; See also Basiron Abdul Wahab, "*Pilihan raya umum: Negara kebajikan, tabung biasiswa antara tawaran PAS*" ("General elections: General elections: PAS offers a welfare state and bursary fund"), *Harakah Daily,* August 28, 2007, http://www.harakahdaily.net/bm/index.php/arkib-pah-ang-darul-makmur/pilihan-raya-umum-negara-kebajikan-tabung-biasiswa-antara-tawaran-pas.html.

[14] Muda Mohd Noor, "*PAS akan lantik orang Cina jadi menteri*" ("PAS will appoint Chinese minister"), *Malaysiakini*, February 6, 2008, http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/77875.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Terrorist Group Profiles. Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM)." Terrorism Research Center, n.d., http://www.terrorism.com.

[17] It is not clear from reports how many members Halaqah Pakindo had, or how regular were its meetings. See Joseph Chinyong Liow, *Piety and Politics: The Shifting Contours of Islamism in Contemporary Malaysia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibidem.

[20] See Kamarulnizam Abdullah, "Islamic Militancy Problems in Malaysia," *SEACSN Bulletin*, January-March 2003.

[21] Ibid.

[22] "Asian Militants With Alleged Al Qaeda Ties Are Accused Of Plotting Against Embassies," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, January 2, 2002.

[23] Ibid.

[24] "Religious Cults And Sects, Doctrines And Practices: Al-Ma'unah," apologeticsindex.org, n.d..

[25] *Liow, Piety and Politics*, 7.

[26] "Two Policemen And Nine More Soldiers Identified As Belonging To The Movement," *New Straits Times*, July 13, 2000.

[27] Kamarulnizam Abdullah, "Islamic Militancy Problems in Malaysia," *SEACSN Bulletin*, January-March 2003, 7.

[28] *Liow, Piety and Politics*, 16.

[29] Ibid.

[30] "Suhakam to Consider Proposal to Set Up Interreligious Council," *New Straits Times*, August 27, 2002.

[31] Ibid.

[32] See, for example, Marc Lynch, *Voices of a New Arab Republic: Iraq, Al Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

[33] A weblog is a regularly updated Web page that provides unedited commentary and hyperlinks to other Web sites and weblogs. Weblogs focus on a variety of topics, ranging from hobbies and celebrity gossip to personal diaries and politics.

[34] Needless to say, this general remark is made based on bloggers who actually sign their names to their posts.

[35] Martinez, "Islam, Pluralism, and Conflict Resolution in Malaysia: The Case of Interfaith Dialogue."

[36] See Mahathir's speech at the 33rd Annual UMNO General Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 10, 1982.

[37] See Norhashimah Mohd. Yasin, *Islamisation/Malaynisation: A Study on the Role of Islamic Law in the Economic Development of Malaysia: 1969–1993* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: A. S. Noordeen, 1996), 261–64. The bank did not offer any interest on deposits it received. Instead, it would share the profits earned from investing the deposits with the bank's customers. The bank was also not charging interest on credit that it extended.

[38] Hajrudin Somun, *Mahathir: The Secret of the Malaysian Success* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications, 2004), 164.