

## MALAYSIA

**Date of Elections:** 22 April 1982

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in the House of Representatives following premature dissolution of Parliament on 29 March 1982. Previous general elections had taken place in July 1978.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The bicameral Parliament of Malaysia consists of a House of Representatives (*Dewan Ra'ayal*) and a Senate (*Dewan Negara*).

The House of Representatives comprises 154 members elected for a 5-year term. Of these, 109 come from the 11 States of Malaya, 24 from Sarawak, 16 from Sabah and 5 from the Federal Territory.

The Senate comprises 68 members. Of these, 26, or 2 elected by each one of the country's 13 State Assemblies and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, are elected. The remaining 42 are appointed by the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*, or Supreme Head of the Federation of Malaysia, from among persons who in his opinion have rendered distinguished public service or have achieved distinction in the professions, commerce, industry, agriculture, cultural activities or social service; who are representative of racial minorities; or who are capable of representing the interests of aborigines. Senators serve for a period of 3 years. The Senate is not subject to dissolution. No Senator may serve for more than two terms.

### **Electoral System**

Every citizen who has attained the age of 21 and who is on the "qualifying date" (date by reference to which the electoral rolls are prepared or revised) resident in a constituency or, if not so resident, is classified as an "absent voter" (one who is registered as an absent voter in respect of that constituency) is entitled to vote in that constituency in any election to the House or Representatives. A person is disqualified from being an elector if on the qualifying date he is detained as a person of unsound mind, is an undischarged bankrupt, is serving a sentence of imprisonment, or remains liable, pursuant to a conviction in any part of the British Commonwealth, to a sentence of death or imprisonment for a term exceeding 12 months.

Electoral registers are drawn up at the constituency level and are revised annually. Voting is not compulsory. Postal voting is permitted for absent voters, members of the police force, those liable for certain duties on polling day and members of the Election Commission.

Every citizen resident in the Federation is qualified to be a member of the House of Representatives if he is not less than 21 years old and of the Senate if at least 30 years old. A person is disqualified from being a member of either House of Parliament if he owes

allegiance to any country outside the Federation, is insane or an undischarged bankrupt, or has been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year or to a fine of not less than M\$ 2,000. Persons holding an "office of profit" (a full-time office in any of the public services, such as the office of any judge of the Federal Court or of a High Court, of Auditor-General, or of a member of the Election Commission) may for their part not simultaneously be members of Parliament.

Each candidate to Parliament—who need not necessarily be a member of a recognized political party—must be supported by six registered electors of his constituency. A candidate to the House of Representatives must make a monetary deposit of M\$ 1,000, which is reimbursed should the candidate poll more than one-eighth of the total number of votes polled by all the candidates in the constituency. A candidate to Parliament must lodge a return of campaign expenses within the time and in the manner required by law. The maximum expenses allowed are M\$ 20,000.

Representatives are elected in 154 single-member constituencies by simple majority.

By-elections are held, or appointments made, within 60 days (90 days in Sabah and Sarawak) to fill parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections. Representatives' seats which become vacant within six months of the scheduled dissolution of Parliament are not filled.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

On the recommendation of the federal Prime Minister, the House of Representatives was dissolved in March 1982 - more than a year before the expiry of its five-year term.

The election campaign was conducted peacefully. It consisted of house-to-house canvassing and indoor lectures. Public rallies were banned. The 75.4% voter turnout was an improvement over the record of the 1978 election.

The election results once again left the National Front, headed by Premier Mahathir bin Mohamed, in a dominant position with as many as 132 of the 154 seats. The DAP secured nine seats, which was seven less than the seats secured by them in the previous elections.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the House of Representatives

Number of registered electors. . . . .	6,081,628
Voters. . . . .	.75.4%
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	.130,615
Valid votes. . . . .	4,165,697

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained		Number of Seats
National Front . . . . .	154	2,522,079	60.54	132 (+ 2)
Democratic Action Party (DAP) . . . .	62	815,473	19.58	9 (-7)
Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP). . .	52	602,530	14.46	5 (=)
Sarawak People's Organization (SAPO)	1	178	0.004	- (-1)
Independents . . . . .	61	157,229	3.77	8 (+ 6)
Other parties . . . . .	118	68,208	1.637	- (=)
				154

2. Distribution of Representatives according  
to Professional Category

Businessmen. . . . .	41
Administrative, managerial and executive posts in public and private sectors. . . . .	34
Lawyers. . . . .	30
Doctors. . . . .	14
Farmers. . . . .	10
Teachers. . . . .	10
Lecturers at institutions of higher learning . . . .	6
Engineers and architects. . . . .	5
Accountants. . . . .	4
	154

3. *Distribution of Representatives according to Sex*

<b>Men</b> . . . . .	<b>146</b>
Women . . . . .	8
	154

4. *Distribution of Representatives according to Age Group*

Under 30 years. . . . .	3
31-40. . . . .	31
41-50. . . . .	<b>101</b>
51-60. . . . . L . . . . .	19
	154