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(IJLGC)**[www.ijlgc.com](http://www.ijlgc.com)**THE VALUE OF PATRIOTISM AND POLITICAL ASPIRATION  
IN THE FORMATION OF NATIONHOOD: AN APPRECIATION  
OF MALAYSIAN INDEPENDENCE HISTORY**Irma Wani Othman<sup>1</sup>, Mohamad Shaukhi Mohd Radzi<sup>2\*</sup>, Mohd Sohaimi Esa<sup>3\*</sup>

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This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

The discussion in this paper focuses on the appreciation of Malaysia's independence in relation to the spirit of patriotism among those who value patriotism and political aspirations in the formation of the Malaysian nation. This study attempts to address issues such as why are there still people who do not understand or remember historical figures' struggles for independence? How do political aspirations play an important role in looking at aspects of prosperity, unity and political stability? In terms the agreement of independence, how important is it to sacrifice self-interest for national interest in order to form a free country? Thus, the primary focus of the debate is to identify the issues referring to political aspirations that can change over time in terms of strategy, but not in terms of the fundamental value of patriotism that does not change from the social contract or ethnic agreement in the formation of the Malaysian nation. This writing employs a qualitative approach that draws on secondary sources such as research findings in journals, scholarly writing, online news sources, and public forums. According to the findings of the study, the formation of political aspirations benefitting in balancing the formation of the country from other aspects and encourage leaders in solving problems related to the country and the people. As a result, the ultimate goal of a cultured society should be national pride and sovereignty. To do so, the dynamic Malaysian nation must develop an identity in order to become a civilised and glorious nation. The study's direction considers the continuation of patriotism as well as the maximum appreciation of Malaysia's independence history to be nurtured and instilled among the younger generation, allowing Malaysia to exist as a strong country in politics, economy, social, and socio-culture.

**Keywords:**

Patriotism Values, Political Aspirations, Independence, Nationhood, Young Generation

**Background**

The primary focus of the debate is to identify the issues referring to political aspirations that can change over time in terms of strategy, but not in terms of the fundamental value of patriotism that does not change from the social contract or ethnic agreement in the formation of the Malaysian nation. Thus, understanding the formation of political aspirations benefitting in balancing the formation of the country from other aspects, hence encourage leaders in solving problems related to the country and the people are discussed below:

**The Independence Spirit in Acquiring Independence:** The appreciation of Malaysian history is closely related to the community's patriotism. Acquiring National Sovereignty: A region's highest power is its sovereignty (Othman, Yusoff, Jupiter & Mokhtar, 2021a). National sovereignty is the highest authority within the country's government. In addition, the sovereignty of an independent nation can create a nation with the authority to govern itself. A nation's sovereignty is a fundamental characteristic. Furthermore, sovereignty is crucial because it is regarded as an asset for defending a nation's independence and dominance against colonisation (Mohamad Kamil, & Mohamad, 2020). In the past, the arrival of western colonialists caused chaos in Malaya, causing hardship and suffering among the population. However, our country's sovereignty was achieved by the uncompromising policy of former Malayan Union fighters, which led to the aspect of sovereignty.

Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, the prime minister of the Federation of Malaya, made the first declaration of independence (Muslim, 2017). On August 31, 1957, after being colonised by foreign powers from the 16th to the 19th centuries, our nation celebrated with joy on that historic day when our nation was finally liberated from colonialism and achieved independence. Through this, our country is now recognised as a sovereign nation because it is independent, authoritative, has its own identity, borders, and government, which was a proud moment for all Malaysians at the time (Esa, Othman, Ationg, Ibrahim, Sharif Adam, Hamid & Hajimin, 2021c). At that time, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, the Father of Malaysia, chanted a sacred slogan for seven times at the Selangor Club Field. The first Prime Minister of Malaysia shouted the Merdeka slogan, which signifies Malaysia's independence from the colonial rule of the great powers, in front of thousands of Malaysians who had never stopped dreaming of this day.

**Sacrificing Self-Interest:** The establishment of Malaysia is the reunification of the archipelago between the Federation of Malaya with Sabah and Sarawak on September 16, 1963. As a country whose society consists of various ethnic groups, religions, cultures, languages and economic backgrounds and practices a system of democracy, having peace in Malaysia is very important as a guarantee to achieve a free country (Ationg, Esa, Ibrahim, Gansau, Totu & Othman, 2021a). The historical evidence of the Malay group found that these three regions have similarities and also share the same group. This can be further strengthened through the sharing of linguistic aspects where the language used by the three regions has Malay characteristics. The archipelago solidarity is said to have sheltered the Chinese and also the

Indians in Malaysia. In relation to that, the social contract is an important basis for creating racial unity. Social contracts are important to create a strong society based on awareness of the importance of the values of mutual understanding, respect and tolerance. The agreement reached through this social contract has allowed our country to achieve independence.

The social contract is an internal essence whose importance can not only be argued through legislation and scholarly discussion, but also historically. Accordingly, it is important for Malaysians to focus on the country's history because history is a discipline that plays an important role. With historical knowledge, this allows us to know and understand exactly what has happened. During the period of independence, Malaysia had achieved independence and was given the right to govern its own country with the help of the British government. Nevertheless, the spirit of patriotism among the Malaysian community, especially the youth, is still lacking and causes Malaysia's achievements in fighting for freedom was taken for granted (Othman, Esa, Abu Bakar & Mokhtar, 2021c). The level of patriotism among the youth in Malaysia is said to be still low. Youth is a valuable asset to the country because it is this group that will become the country's leaders in the future. In addition, the youth act as an agent to ensure that the harmony and unity of the country continue to last (Othman, Yusoff, Mohd Shah, Esa, Ationg, Ibrahim & Raymond Majumah, 2021b).

**Political Aspirations in the Formation of the Malaysian Nation:** Political aspirations are elements that involve the people or political welfare. These political aspirations are usually conveyed to the respective representative in the House of People's Representatives. It was also apparent that the late Tun Abdul Rahman and the late Onn Jaafaar played out and planned their political ambitions in moving UMNO to other coalition parties in maintaining political ambitions to maintain sovereignty and even towards fighting for independence. The selection of national leaders especially those coming from youth generation is influenced by multiple factors, including education, socioeconomic, sociocultural, environmental, social interaction, media, and social mobility (Esa, Othman, Abu Bakar & Mokhtar, 2021d). However, the political aspirations take on a different form when we consider a landscape design that also promotes prosperity and unity. As a result, the manner in which political aspirations are utilised is quite significant, given that prosperity, unity, and social stability can be maintained through political aspirations.

### Literature Review

The term patriotism derives from the Greek word "*patriotes*", which means "countrymen" or those who are at the forefront of efforts to defend the nation. There are two perspectives on patriotism: blind patriotism and constructive patriotism. Blind patriotism is a state of uncritical support for the actions of a group, whereas constructive patriotism is a critical understanding of the importance of group loyalty. Blind patriotism emphasises conservative political cooperation or political party identity, whereas constructive patriotism emphasises cooperation through efficient political implementation, political knowledge, political information gathering, and political activities (Ibrahim, Ationg, Esa, Abang Muis, Othman, Yusoff & Mokhtar, 2021a).

**The Spirit of Independence in Achieving Independence:** The appreciation of Malaysian history is closely related to the spirit of patriotism in the community. Patriotism is divided into two aspects, namely value-based patriotism and egocentric patriotism (Ku Samsu, Adnan, Ismail, Lee, Ab. Majid & Ab. Razak, 2020). Value-based patriotism is an aspect of loyalty and

love of an individual to his country based on certain factors that can benefit the people such as the country's achievements in economic, social and political aspects as well as other privileges. On the other hand, egocentric patriotism is also an aspect of an individual's loyalty and love for his country, but the individual who practices this aspect only loves his country on the basis that this country is the country where he was born and not on the country's ability to give certain achievements and privileges to the individual.

Based on the evidence of both aspects of patriotism, Ku Samsu *et al.*, (2020) thinks that the egocentric aspect of patriotism is true love for the country. This is so because individuals who belong to this aspect of patriotism will be willing to sacrifice for the country without expecting or charging any incentives, rewards or remuneration for sticking to the principle of 'it is their country'. Therefore, egocentric patriots think that what belongs to them belongs to the country. Individuals who belong to the value-based patriotism group are those who are not sincere in fighting for their country because they are materialistic and only care about the profit they can get if their country achieves something special.

Next, the meaning of patriotism based on Abdul Hamid, Esa, Ationg, Othman, Sharif Adam, Mohd Tamring & Hajimin (2021) states that patriotism is in accordance with seven noble values found in the context of Malaysia, namely understanding of the country's administrative system, pride in being a Malaysian, a sense of belonging or belonging to the country, being disciplined or having good manners for the good name of the country, loyalty to the country, affection for the country of Malaysia and increased productivity for the sake of the country. This can also be seen in the pillars of the Malaysian state which are Belief in God, Loyalty to King and Country, Sublimity of the Constitution, Rule of Law, Politeness and Morality.

All the statements stated in the national constitution highlight aspects of the spirit of independence which is patriotism. The country of Malaysia practices a lot of concepts that show the spirit of independence but in different aspects. Patriotic values can also be translated through respect for emblems and symbols that are the basis of national identity and a sign of national sovereignty. For example, the emblem or symbol that is the identity of our country is the Malaysian flag song, the national anthem, the national coat of arms, the national pillar and everything related to the Malaysian constitution (Ibrahim, Ationg, Esa, Abang Muis, Othman, Yusoff & Mokhtar, 2021b). This symbol serves to foster loyalty and pride because it is considered an important identity that reflects the dignity of a nation and country. Furthermore, this spirit can foster the awareness of every Malaysian to carry out the national development agenda collectively and together.

**Political Aspirations in the Formation of the Malaysian Nation:** Political aspirations were implemented by the late Tunku Abdul Rahman and the late Onn Jaafar in moving UMNO into political parties to ensure the prosperity and harmony of the country. In addition to political aspirations, there are several aspirations that need to be demonstrated to ensure balance in social and economic aspects for the formation of a nation state especially proven by leadership charismatic from unseen rural areas (Majumah, Ationg, Esa, Abang Muis, Othman, Mokhtar & Muda, 2021). This aspiration also changes with the passage of time in terms of strategy but in terms of fundamentals it does not change from social contrasts or ethnic agreements by sharing power in politics. Political leadership aspirations are also important in ensuring balance in the selection of leaders in ensuring that aspects of prosperity, unity and social stability are always maintained (Hanafi, Abdul Rahman & Mohd Noor, 2016).

Politicians are responsible for supporting political aspirations towards the development of community life and the development of a country even though there are many models in evaluating the country's political leadership (Esa, Ationg, Othman, Raymond Majumah, Abu Bakar, Mohd Shah & Yusoff, 2021a). Thus, identified that there are several domains that are important in conducting research on leadership at the national level. Among the domains is that accountability leadership is a form of leadership that leads to the encouragement of followers that explains the justification of actions. In addition, governance network leadership encourages followers to actively connect with the national leadership (Wan Daud, 2015). Uthman (2015) used the domain in studying the aspirations of political leadership which is the election of a political party. There are various categories of leaders that have been identified in various studies.

As a result of past studies, the following leadership styles identified are Transformational Leadership, Transactional and non-Transactional, *laissez-faire* Leadership (Uthman, 2015). In this study, the leadership construct that was studied involved four categories namely leader credibility, struggle idealism, political leadership style and concern, and belonging in the selection of political leaders. Malaysia is a country that practices a parliamentary democratic system under the administration of a constitutional monarch. Democracy is a system of government where all the people in a country are involved in the government through voting to choose the representatives, they want to be leaders. In addition to the democratic system, the constitutional Monarchy system where the Yang Dipertuan Agung is the Head of State and the Constitutional Monarch according to the provisions of the Federal Constitution (Mohd Yusoff & Jamian, 2011).

The principle of loyalty to the King and the State, the supremacy of the constitution and the rule of law are relevant with democratic aspirations where all citizens have rights and freedoms based on the provisions of the constitution and national laws. In ensuring that this aspiration can be realized, all citizens are obliged to understand their rights in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Constitution and the law in force. When the country is faced with problems and challenges, the interests of the nation and the country should be prioritized over the interests of races, tribes and groups for the well-being and sovereignty of the country.

**Sacrificing Self-Interest:** In the context of the history of the Archipelago civilization as an integrated region that includes the circle of cultural and linguistic influence in Southeast Asia, we also see the success of its community in supporting the Malay language as a language of communication (Musa, Che Rodi & Muhammad, 2014). Malay is spoken by the people on a daily basis is also recognized as the language of international trade relations throughout the Middle Ages from the 7th Century AD to the 19th Century AD (Che Hodi & Musa, 2014). The independence of Malaya on 31 August 1957 and the formation of Malaysia which fell on September 16<sup>th</sup>, in the year of 1963 saw the use of the Malay language as a medium of communication for the unification of race, ethnicity and religion among Malaysians (Yusoff, Othman, Jupiter & Mokhtar, 2021). Although the people in Malaysia use different speech dialects, the people of this country are tied to the Malay language which is known as the national language as stated in Article 152 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia (Mohamed & Hassan, 2019).

Among the constitutions provided for the Malays are, the Malay language as the national language, Islam as the official religion of the federation and given a special position and Malay

Kings are a traditional element in the constitution (Ismail & Mujani, 2020). Amendments to item 1 and item 2 were also made for the purpose of including Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore as well as changing the name of the Federation of Malaya to the Federation of Malaysia (Abd Razak, 2009). The bargaining process that has been carried out between the three largest ethnic groups, which consists of the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians through the UMNO party, the MCA party and also the MIC party has succeeded in creating a balance and giving importance to various ethnicities in the Federal Constitution. This has also proven that during the drafting of the constitution in 1957, Malays and non-Malays were very protective of their interests for an independent country (Abd Razak, 2009).

**Achievement of National Sovereignty:** The word sovereignty means the highest power possessed by a country. The emergence of this concept is influenced by the growth process of modern countries. In general, sovereignty is the highest power possessed by an institution in society, politics to make decisions about matters related to administration and politics (Embong, 2015). In addition, sovereignty is also important to gain recognition from foreign countries. With the existence of sovereignty, Malaysia is recognized in the eyes of the world. Besides that, the appointment of Malaysia to the UN Security Council is an achievement obtained with strong support from countries that previously did not recognize Malaysia. The international community is also aware of the existence and greatness of Malaysia, which is almost comparable to the developed industrialized countries of the world and has begun to consider Malaysia as one of the countries that will dominate the scenario of the 21st century (Baharudin & Yusoff, 2014).

In addition, unity must also be cultivated to maintain the sovereignty of a country. In our country, unity is fostered through national culture because the Malaysian society derives from various ethnic cultures where the goal is to strengthen the unity of the Malaysian nation (Lukin, Esa, Abang Muis, Ationg, Mohd Tamring, Othman & Mokhtar, 2021). As citizens, we need to act wisely to maintain this harmony and unity by helping each other, protecting each other, advising each other and together preserving the sovereignty of this country even though we are made up of from different backgrounds in terms of religion, race, politics and ideology (Sharif Adam, Othman, Hamid, Esa, Ationg, Lukin & Mohd Tamring, 2021). National sovereignty emphasizes the unity of the people because only with unity can sovereignty be maintained (Amir, 2009).

The harmonious relationship between these races will further strengthen the sovereignty and development of the country (Lukin *et al.*, 2021). Sovereignty plays an important role in order for the country to be free from external threats. In addition, a sovereign country is a country that is free from any foreign interference or threat and also rule in its own way. Therefore, the people and the state could carry out any activity as long as it does not go against the law. Being free from the influence of foreign countries will launch the way of the government and administration of the country. Therefore, sovereignty is important for the country to be free from being a colony (Musa, 2004). Malaysia prioritizes the spirit of cooperation and getting along with all countries regardless of political ideology, thus it always started with internationalization in educational sector (Othman, Mohd Kamal, Yusoff, Norazah, Awang & Jupiter, 2017). In terms of security, our country needs to avoid any threats from foreign countries. Hence, we need a foreign policy that can maintain good relations with all countries (Musa, 2004).

## Methodology

The research methodology in this writing uses a qualitative approach based on social science disciplines that require careful observation of aspects that focus more on processes and events. Information from various sources such as primary and secondary sources using secondary data content analysis methods related to history, law, historiography, sociology and ethnography and coupled with descriptive analytical discussion (Creswell, 2014; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). The use of a qualitative approach in this writing utilizes secondary sources such as research results in journals, scholarly writing, online news sources and public forums. The results of the study that are related to the formation of political aspirations can help in balancing the formation of the country from other aspects and can help leaders in solving problems related to the country and the people. As such, this academic writing specifically uses literature review by gathering primary and secondary sources to clarify facts based on issues related to real events.

## Discussion

This study attempts to address issues such as I. Why are there still people who do not understand or remember historical figures' struggles for independence? II. How do political aspirations factor into considerations of prosperity, unity, and political stability? III. In terms of agreement, how important is it to sacrifice self-interest for national interest in order to form a free country? The primary focus of the debate is to identify the debate that refers to political aspirations that can change over time in terms of strategy, but not in terms of the fundamental value of patriotism that does not change from the social contract or ethnic agreement in the formation of the Malaysian nation.

### *Why are There Still People Who do Not Understand and Remember the Struggle of Historical Figures in Achieving Independence?*

The Malaysian nation has achieved the right to freedom on 31 August 1957. This achievement is the greatest achievement in the history of Malaysia. Nevertheless, the independence that was achieved once upon a time is less remembered and proud of by Malaysians. The group that is the targeted or the cause of the issue of lack of appreciation and uncultivated patriotism is the youth group, that aged between 15 and 30 years. This group is said to have lack of awareness about the importance of appreciating history in Malaysia. Patriotism is often considered as loyalty and love for the country and nation. The birth of a society that is not sensitive to the history of Malaysian independence is the lack of appreciation of the history subject. History subject is very important because it is an element that strengthens feelings, attitudes, views and values towards the country. This is also linked to the spirit, feelings, attitude, idealism that touches on national issues, struggles, sacrifices and contributions of citizens towards the country, race and religion.

Loyalty should not only be to the country but also to figures, religion, teachings, and other objects that have been legalized to the aspect of nationhood (A'zmi, Mustafar & Abdul Karim, 2017). Appreciation in the history subject is an important aspect. Teachers need to attract students' attention in learning history, especially the history of the formation of Malaysia. Institutions that train teachers also need to work harder to produce teachers who have a high sense of patriotism so that students can use their teachers as role models. In order to transform and acculturate the students into fostering the spirit of patriotism among the young generation is for universities to hold a program that allows them to re-enact the events or characters of the national fighters (Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Esa, Ationg, Ramlie & Abdul Rahman, 2021h).

This method is considered very effective because the field of entertainment industry is one of the aspects that allows the country's economy to grow and is of interest to the current generation.

This can also recall the struggle of independence figures and at the same time be able to retell it directly to the younger generation. Therefore, the history of Malaysia will not easily fade in the soul of the future 'child of independence' who will become the leader of the Malaysian nation. The spirit of patriotism is very important in the appreciation of our country's history. The feeling of love and being willing to sacrifice for the country is not something that can arise on its own in every individual. These feelings need to be nurtured and embedded in each individual since childhood. The young generation needs to realize that the peace and well-being of the country that is being enjoyed today did not come without sacrifice. The struggle to achieve absolute independence involves bloodshed and sacrifice of life. The freedom enjoyed today would not have been achieved if the previous individuals did not have a deep sense of love in fighting for the freedom of Malaysia.

The heroes that we have studied in the history subject need to be remembered and praised for successfully achieving independence for Malaysia. Historical figures need to be known by the younger generation. The contribution of these figures is enormous in the history of Malaysian independence. The history subject is also a subject that must be passed in every assessment and examination held by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, but there are still many young generations who think that history is a subject that does not benefit the future and is difficult to understand. Therefore, this lack of patriotism is due to the simple generational attitude that does not appreciate history. The varsities must play an important role in educating students to take history seriously and emphasise the needs to be more sensitive to the attitude of its students in the aspect of appreciating the history subject (Othman, Ibrahim, Esa, Ationg, Mokhtar, Mohd Tamring & Sharif Adam, 2021j). In addition, strengthening unity among multiracial communities also needs to be done.

The Malaysian population is clearly made up of a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society. The original population of Malaysia is the Malay, Jakun and Semelai communities in Peninsular Malaysia while in Sabah and Sarawak there are more ethnic variations such as Kadazan, Dusun, Murut, Rungus, Iban, Lundayeh, Bajau and so on. Apart from the original people in Malaysia, Malaysia also has people from other countries, mainly Chinese, Indian and Indonesian, who have moved to Malaysia (Abd Razak, 2009). This happens due to the process of interaction and assimilation between these races. The concept of a plural society took hundreds of years to form. A pluralistic society is a group of societies consisting of various races that form a population where they live separately (Lukin *et al.*, 2021). The history education in Malaysia does not ignore the history of colonialism, which occurred centuries ago. Therefore, the formation of a plural society is also a part of Malaysia's history.

According to Sharif Adam *et al.*, (2021), she agreed that a pluralistic society was consistent with the colonial policies that introduced foreign races to Malaya. In terms of descent, religion, language, and customs, the colonisation area in Malaya has spawned a plural society whose members are interconnected but follow distinct ways of life. Thus, the concept of a pluralistic society contributes to the difficulty of Malaysian society in appreciating its own history. This multiracial society also leads to a lack of patriotism within the community. Race is a sensitive issue and can cause racial animosity and at the same time divide the unity of Malaysians. The



concept of the Chinese and Indians as races that are considered successful and have good jobs in Malaysia while the Malays only get simple jobs and even find it difficult to get jobs causes dissatisfaction among the multi-racial community.

Malays feel that their rights as Malays are ignored by society. Local people find it difficult to get a job while foreigners find it easier to get a job in Malaysia. Although the real cause of this is because local people are too picky about jobs, the community will blame the government for failing to handle the economy well (Mohd Shah, Othman, Yusoff, Ationg, Abu Bakar, Esa & Abang Muis, 2021). This causes the local community to feel left out and think that Malaysian history is not important in their lives. Malaysians who are made up of different races and religions are one of the factors in the lack of patriotism in the community. The cultural mix of Westerners who once colonized our country became more dominant than the Malay culture itself. Furthermore, Western culture is considered more attractive by the Malaysian community. Unlike Malaysia, the biggest religion practiced by people in the West is Christianity while the official religion for people in Malaysia is Islam.

Malaysia has laws based on religion that must be obeyed. Malaysia even has a special court which is solely based on religion which is the Syariah Court which manages matters related to cases related to religion. This is very good but there are a few people who feel that they as Malaysians have limited human rights. For example, the case of Muhammad Sajjad bin Kamaruzzaman or better known as Nur Sajad, a successful businessman in Malaysia who has changed his original gender from male to female, has attracted the anger of several parties because it is considered a violation of the law at the same time on the side of Islam. Gender change is considered abominable in Islam because individuals who change their gender seem to be ungrateful of the gift given by the Almighty (Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Abu Bakar, Zulhaimi, Abang Muis, & Muda, 2021). This causes the individual to decide to move out of the country and become a permanent citizen in Australia which is more open to individuals who change their original gender. This case shows that a few people in Malaysia think that the Malaysian state does not give the right to its people (Ismail & Mujani, 2020).

### ***How do Political Aspirations Play an Important Role in Looking at Aspects of Prosperity, Unity and Political Stability?***

The formation of political aspirations can help in balancing the formation of the country from other aspects and can help leaders in solving problems related to the country as well as the people. The findings suggest that political aspirations are not only seen through political problems but can be seen through various aspects in the emphasis of political aspirations. This discussion is divided into three aspects namely prosperity, unity and social stability.

**Prosperity:** Certain aspects of principles that ensure the prosperity of both leaders and citizens are crucial to the development of a nation with a more just and principled foundation. Prosperity also indicates advancement, success, and existing well-being. By establishing aspects of prosperity and emphasising other aspects, political ambitions can be balanced. Among the proposed solutions is the establishment of a just society in which the country's prosperity can be enjoyed fairly and equitably. Political aspirations can also be linked to those of a just society, which exists when all citizens have equal rights to enjoy the country's prosperity and wealth. Moreover, all citizens must be provided with equal access to education, culture, and other fields.

Injustice and inequality can engender discontent among the primary marginalised group and spark societal conflict. Additionally, fair and equitable implies that each citizen receives the same facilities or material distribution in terms of quantity, but according to their individual needs. The practise of an inclusive, caring, and empathetic attitude is required to ensure that those in need receive assistance so that they have the same opportunity to compete with developed nations (Musa, 2004). For instance, assisting poor entrepreneurs and numerous other activities. This is necessary to guarantee that nobody is marginalised. In addition, Malaysia implemented a number of economic development plans to improve the standard of living of its citizens, including the Five-Year Development Plan and others.

In addition, for Malaysia to advance, it must produce more experts in various fields in order to establish a healthy ecosystem and generate a large number of employment opportunities in order to maintain the equality of rights between communities. On the other hand, the culture identity of other employees coming from abroad must not be discriminate thus the idea of patriotism should be respected by all parties (Othman, 2019). This will also lead to conflict if it is not properly maintained so that peace and prosperity are always preserved (Abdullah, 2010). In addition, there are obstacles to establishing a Malaysian nation with shared goals in order to create a fair and equitable society where all communities can enjoy prosperity. In addition, if equal rights are not implemented, the assessment between ethnic groups can cause dissatisfaction among marginalised communities that demand their rights and have an effect on the relationship gap between the communities of a country. In order to create a prosperous society, Malaysia also ensures that the country's economic strength is competitive and proactive in overcoming future challenges.

**Unity:** In this context, the aspect of unity is very important in ensuring equality and unity in forming a national identity such as one nation and one language. Unity among the community can be created in creating a harmonious society and racial issues can be reduced (Basir, 2012). Taking into account the context of a country that has ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity, the concept of unity emphasized is 'Unity in Diversity'. Due to these differences, efforts towards creating unity in Malaysia need to be complemented and underpinned by continuous integration efforts. For example, achieving close unity among the community where cultural diversity against countries that were once colonized by western powers is absolutely depending on acceptance of differences in terms of race, religion, social class, level of education and more (Othman, Ationg, Esa, Hajimin & Abang Muis, 2021i). This often becomes a trigger point for friction, disagreement and conflict.

This is an exception for countries that have the same race, culture and language. Therefore, accepting diversity needs to be accepted by all communities so that harmony is always maintained. According to the arguments of academics, distinguished Professor Datuk Dr. Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, unity in the form of a dream that has not yet been achieved and is difficult to realize. Unity can only be achieved if all citizens agree and reach a consensus on the majority of community issues (Esa, Ationg, Othman, Mohd Shah, Yusoff, Ramlie & Abang Muis, 2021b). Not only that, the concept of constitutional community means that a community needs to be exposed to the constitution and not just from the legal aspect but from other aspects such as culture, religion, historical perspective and many more (Ismail & Mujani, 2020). In addition, the appreciation of the National Principles (*Rukun Negara*) is necessary to ensure that the belief in our nation's unity is unique and valuable in order to create a more unified nation.

Mutual understanding must be emphasised in both society and among leaders in order to facilitate the formation of unity among both leaders and citizens and to make Malaysia a unified nation. Hence, a rational emphasis must be placed on something in order for the community to accept each other with ease, given that social media has increased exposure to issues that lead to critical thinking. In terms of economic prosperity, political stability, and harmonious interethnic relations, Malaysia is still held up as a model by the international community despite the fact that unity has not yet been achieved (Othman, Yusoff, Awang & Jupiter, 2016a). This effort must continue so that all Malaysians can continue to enjoy greater harmony and peace. In addition, racial diversity must be achieved to promote a healthier living environment and foster cohesion among multiracial communities. Additionally, religion and spirituality inspire us to live a noble and compassionate life. Understanding and acceptance between communities are essential to ensuring that community interaction is always maintained.

**Social stability:** Social stability is one of the important aspects in improving an individual's ability to achieve healthy social cohesion and stability based on the characteristics of unity, resilience, democratic, moral and many more. In addition, with social stability, social needs can be met for each individual. Among them is building a progressive society with cultural traditions. As sovereign and developing country, Malaysia needs to maintain competitiveness and thrive in line with the pace of world development as always perceived by the world (Othman, Yusoff, Awang, & Jupiter, 2016b). With the existence of the economy, the community can strengthen and build strong competitiveness, the development process can be carried out with greater vigour, and more of the country's wealth can be used for the community, leading to an increase in the people's standard of living. In addition, Malaysia must be committed to being a leader in certain fields of science and technology in order to increase its competitiveness (Hasan, Jamalolail, Abd Rahman, Ahmad & Amaris, 2022).

Moreover, a society that is sensitive to information is one that always cultivates the use of information to ensure that its members always make the correct decisions. In fact, they also have the ability to locate information and distinguish between true and false data. In addition, the acceptance of culture, tradition, and customs, as well as the diversity of agamids, is essential for maintaining social stability (Rambely & Haniffa, 2018). Besides that, liberal attitudes promote interaction in diverse communities, the exchange of experiences, and the propagation of new ideas for the advancement of the nation. In this instance, the liberal attitude that promotes relationships in diverse communities can encourage the sharing of experiences and the development of new ideas for the nation's progress.

Every community must be sensitive and prudent when evaluating good practises, such as knowledge culture, research, and many others, to imitate. In accordance, Malaysia's cultural wealth and diversity constitute a strength (Rahim, Ismail, Ahmad, Aziz & Puteh, 2011). In addition, cultural art within the community must be utilised to assist in the formation of a community with its own identity and personality, so as to prevent the erosion of culture by the currents of globalisation. This can be maintained by preserving the original meaning and context of cultural traditions, so that they are always transmitted to future generations.

### ***In Terms the Agreement of Independence, How does Sacrificing Self-interest for National Interest Important to Form a Free Country?***

The establishment of Malaysia is the reunification of the archipelago between the Federation of Malaya and part of the archipelago in the Borneo region, namely Sabah and Sarawak. The

people enjoy prosperity, which can be seen through some historical evidence of the Malay cluster when it was found that these three regions have similarities and also share the same cluster (Othman, Yusoff, Mohd Shah, Mokhtar, Abang Muis, Marinsah & Marzuki, 2021g). This can be further strengthened through the sharing of linguistic aspects where the language used by the three regions has Malay characteristics. So, with that, it is this archipelago solidarity that is said to have sheltered the Chinese and also the Indians found in Malaysia. In the context of the history of the archipelago's civilization as an integrated region that includes the sphere of cultural and linguistic influence in Southeast Asia, we also see the success of its community in supporting the Malay language as an intermediate (Rahim, Ismail, Ahmad, Aziz & Puteh, 2011).

In addition, the Malay language is not only spoken by the people on a daily basis but is also recognized as the language of international trade relations throughout the Middle Ages of the 7th Century AD until the 19th Century AD (Hassan, Angterian & Yusop, 2017). According to Musa and Che Rodi (2014), since the independence of Malaya on 31 August 1957 and the formation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963 the Malay language has been used as a medium of communication for the unification of race, ethnicity and religion among Malaysians. While according to Musa, Che Rodi and Muhammad (2014), even though the people in Malaysia use different speech dialects, the people of this country are tied to the Malay language which is known as the national language as stated in Article 152 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia. Which is why the Malay language is recognized as the national language of Malaysia because of its very important role in uniting the multi-racial, ethnic and religious community in Malaysia (Othman, Esa, Ationg & Muda (2021f).

Nonetheless, as a country comprised of people from diverse ethnicities, cultures, religions, linguistic backgrounds, and economic backgrounds that practises a democratic system, preserving peace in Malaysia is crucial because it is a prerequisite for achieving prosperity. This is due to the fact that unity is a pillar of the country's peace and prosperity that must be emphasised and preserved to be sustained over time. If this is not handled properly, conflict, disagreement, and chaos will ensue, similar to the events of May 13. Therefore, the social contract is of utmost importance for achieving democratic requirements and fostering racial unity.

### ***What are The Achievements of The Former Fighters in Achieving National Sovereignty?***

The first topic addressed in this regard is how our nation was liberated from the colonial rule of foreign powers. We commemorate the early struggle for independence by dispatching an independence group to London to negotiate with the British. On 18 January 1956, a gathering was held at the Air Force Airport in Sungai Besi, Kuala Lumpur, to welcome the arrival of the Independence Delegation to London to discuss issues related to the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya. The return of seven members of the entourage led by YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, was greeted by more than two thousand people. The entourage included three government representatives and three representatives of the Malay Rulers (Amir, 2009). The group's conference lasted for 3 weeks from 18 January to 6 February 1956.

In the discussion, the matters that were presented were that Malaya would be independent within the 'British Commonwealth', financial affairs, security, internal administration, defence and affairs abroad will be held and managed by the ministers of the Federation of Malaya, the

Independent Committee for Independence was established to study and recommend changes in the constitution on the condition that it does not change the special position of the Malay Monarchs. As a result of the Malaya Merdeka Conference, the Federation of Malaya Independence Agreement, also known as the London Agreement, was signed on 8 February 1956 at Lancaster House, London. This agreement was signed between YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Chief Minister of the Federation of Malaya on behalf of the government of the Federation of Malaya and Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, Secretary of State for the British Colonies on behalf of the British Government (Amir, 2009).

Next, the achievements of former fighters can be seen through the stages of the historical progress of the Federation of Malaya. Before our country was called Malaysia, our country was known as Tanah Malaya. Malaya consists of Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak. On 31 August 1957, Malaya was declared independent and free from the British rule. The first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, announced the formation of Malaysia at the Southeast Asian Foreign Correspondents Association Conference held at the Adelphi Hotel, Singapore on May 27, 1961. On July 23, 1961, a Commonwealth of Malaya Branch Parliamentary Association Meeting was held in Singapore. The formation of the Malaysian Unity Consultative Committee (MSCC) was established chaired by Mohammad Fuad Stephens. Then, the second meeting of the Malaysian Unity Consultation Committee was held from 18 December to 20 December 1961 in Kuching, Sarawak.

The third meeting of the Malaysian Unity Consultation Committee was held at the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall, Kuala Lumpur. The meeting was held on 6 and 7 January 1962. The event of Cobbold Commission agreement was formed on 17 January 1962 chaired by Cameron Cobbold. On 22 July 1963, Sarawak gained independence and was followed by independence Sabah on 31 August 1963. However, on the day Sabah became independent, the Philippines and Indonesia continuously opposed and urged the United Nations to send a mission to Borneo. The Philippines severed diplomatic relations with Malaysia after Sabah was united with the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. This matter was dissolved in 1989. Following this, on 16 September 1963 Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak formed a new nation, which is known all over the world which is Malaysia. Thus, on 9 August 1965, Singapore decided to leave Malaysia.

The next achievement in achieving national sovereignty is through the ethnic agreement between the Malays and non-Malays (Chinese and Indian) or known as the social contract. The social contract in Malaysia refers to the agreement by the national independence figures in the Constitution. This agreement is a give-and-take or quid pro quo through Article 14-18 which deals with the granting of Malaysian citizenship to non-Malays (Chinese and Indian), as well as giving them the special rights of the people from the native people through Article 153. This contract enables the desire to free the country of Malaya from British colonialism. This contract can be used as an agreement written and stipulated by law involving all communities in Malaya. Consensus between races can also be achieved through this contract and the desire to achieve independence can be achieved. Although the social contract is not clearly mentioned in the federal constitution, the foundations of the Malaysian constitution are built on this social contract.

This basis is what is called a traditional element in the Federal (Baharudin, & Yusoff, 2014). The people must first be reminded that the Social Contract requires the consent of two parties,

Malays and non-Malays. Citizenship will be given to non-Malays by accepting the conditions, namely, Islam as the official religion, Malay as the national language, the special position of the Malays, the privileges of the natives of Sabah and Sarawak and the institution of the Malay Monarchs. The success of this social contract is the basis of the country's administration because harmony between the Malays and non-Malays can launch the country's administration. Therefore, both parties must resolve this issue in order to launch the pursuit of unity and independence, which can be realised through the tolerance of these three races. Borneo and Singapore had not yet achieved independence when Malaya's independence was proclaimed.

Consequently, the Federation of Malaysia can assist other states in quickly attaining independence (Embong, 2015). This is due to the fact that the British colonial countries were not prepared to govern themselves, so the British acted as their guide. Due to their relatively small populations, it was difficult for Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah to achieve independence from the British government (Abd Razak, 2009). Sabah and Sarawak's membership in Malaysia can expedite the attainment of independence, and the two states will also experience political, economic, and social growth together. The co-founding of Sabah and Sarawak can provide numerous benefits to the administration of Malaya and the political stability of Southeast Asia as a whole. The British hoped that the formation of Malaysia would prevent communist influence from spreading to Singapore, Brunei, Sabah, and Sarawak. In the 1960s, the British envisioned a future for the territories they governed, including Singapore, Brunei, Sabah, and Sarawak.

Despite Malaya's interest in Malaysia and the British's wishes and desires, the British, particularly in the Colonial Office, recognised that the future of the Borneo region depends on its affiliation with a large federation (Uthman, 2015). The British included Sabah and Sarawak to further their economic interests. This is said to be the case due to the abundance of natural resources in Malaya, such as tin and rubber. Sabah and Sarawak have abundant forest resources. This provides an advantage for the development of Malaya's national economy and the improvement of the people's standard of living, particularly in Sabah and Sarawak. The subsequent objective is to make Malay our national language. Therefore, making Malay the national language can promote unity among Malaysia's diverse communities. The struggle for the independence of the Malay language as the national language is the process of establishing the Malay language as a great, renowned, independent, and dominant language in the world.

The 1957 Federal Constitution also established Malay as the official language, defining it as the language used in all official matters at the three executive levels of the country, namely the federal government, state governments, and public authorities (Yusoff *et al.*, 2021). The use of Malay by all communities facilitates mutual comprehension and facilitates social interaction. Therefore, recognising Malay language as the national language can unite the population and strengthen the nation's unity and sovereignty. Since the resurgence of national pride, a process of developing the Malay language's sovereignty has been underway in our country. It is believed that this is the case because the Malay people fought fiercely for the independence of the Malay language, particularly during the declaration of the Malayan Union. Malay is designated as the country's national language, official language, and language of knowledge by the Federal Constitution of 1957, the supreme law of the land. Therefore, it is appropriate to view the rise of language sovereignty at that time as the foundation for the formation of a new nation-state.

The Malays believe that the Malay language, as the national language, signifies the existence of a country and a nation. Language is one of the most significant containers as a symbol of a nation's identity; it can even foster values toward the formation of a new independent nation (Othman *et al.*, 2021a). Malaysia is, as we all know, a multi-ethnic country with a diverse population. Even though Malay is used as the language of instruction in our country, there are ethnic languages that are spoken by the local population. The Malay language is used as a mediator for racial (Rambely & Haniffa, 2018). It is crucial for us to maintain the unity and harmony in our country that is desired in a multiracial, multi-ethnic, and multireligious society. Because our nation is able to maintain a state of harmony and tolerance, it is possible for those who speak an ethnic language to do so in comfort.

Moreover, there are numerous distinct ethnic languages in our country. For instance, the Chinese have Mandarin, Hakka, Cantonese, and Hokkien while the Indians speak Tamil. Each state has its own distinct language and dialect. For instance, Sarawakians speak the Iban language and Sabahan speak the Kadazan Dusun language. Each ethnic language possesses distinctive characteristics. Consequently, despite the fact that our country has a variety of languages and dialects, the Malay language acts as the primary factor and foundation of our unity. Therefore, it is essential that we respect other races, religions, and cultures at all times. This allows us to enjoy the three major races and hundreds of ethnic groups sheltered within a single nation.

### Conclusion

The spirit of independence in achieving independence is an understanding of patriotism as well as a maximum appreciation of the history of Malaysia's independence allows Malaysia to exist as a strong country in certain aspects such as politics, economy, social, socio-culture and so on. The spirit of independence that is fostered and instilled in the young generation able to increase the prestige of the country's achievements in gaining independence and successfully governing its own country until now.

Efforts in preserving and conserving the treasures and history of our country need to be done in various ways so that the objective can be achieved. Various parties need to play an important role in this effort. Parents and schools also need to instil the spirit of patriotism in children from a young age so that they have a better understanding of the importance of Malaysian historical events. Therefore, they can appreciate and remember historical events such as the formation of Malaysia which caused the younger generation to enjoy prosperity in Malaysia for many years.

The use of the Malay language and this social contract have contributed to the country's success in achieving unity among its diverse population. This social contract is sacrificing self-interest that will ensure that all parties' rights and interests are fair and equitable. This is due to the fact that this social contract prioritises common rights for the benefit of the nation over individual rights. In addition, all generational groups must have a shared understanding of this social contract in order to form a solid understanding of the cooperation agreement between Malays and non-Malays. This clearly demonstrates that the Federal Constitution of Malaysia is able to form a bond with the acceptance attitude of Malays and non-Malays, resulting in a harmonious society and a free and independent nation to this day.

Political aspirations in the formation of the Malaysian nation started long before the political aspirations played out and planned by the late Tun Abdul Rahman and the late Onn Jaafar in

moving UMNO to other coalition parties in maintaining political aspirations to maintain sovereignty, even to the point of fighting for the country's independence politically in order to guarantee the prosperity and harmony of a nation. The government needs to carry out its responsibilities in various aspects, especially the political aspect i.e. administration and national affairs so that the sovereignty of the country can be maintained. Achieving national sovereignty is what we remember and learn from the struggles of past figures in order to achieve national sovereignty.

The significance of establishing a sovereign state is to preserve national unity and harmony. As a result of the existence of national sovereignty, we can enjoy numerous benefits from a variety of perspectives. Creating a sovereign nation provides our nation with the independence to govern itself without outside interference. In addition, sovereignty will produce a peaceful and tranquil nation. Therefore, this can improve our society's economy and standard of living especially by promoting policies in relating with the needs, thus strengthening the country's entrepreneurship ecosystem (Othman, Mokhtar, Maidin & Moharam, 2021e). We can also foster a sense of national unity among our citizens. In addition, our nation is able to establish diplomatic relations with other nations and can enhance its reputation.

Hence, national sovereignty is the foundation of our country's harmony, as demonstrated by the efforts of former figures to elevate the Malay language to national language status. Through the sacrifice of former figures, our nation's sovereignty can be achieved. Every action is undertaken for the greater good of the community and the independence of Malaya. Various battles were fought for our comfort by historical figures starting with the formation of Malaysia, which united Sabah and Sarawak, followed by the formation of the independence group that won the consent of the British and led to the independence of Malaya. The social contract agreement that allowed non-Malays to become citizens of our country after the unification of Malaysia enhanced the struggle of our figures. Not forgetting the struggle to establish Malay language as a national language which is capable of uniting Malaysians and ensuring the harmony of our nation.

In conclusion, a cultured society's ultimate objective should be national pride and national sovereignty. To do so, the dynamic Malaysian nation must develop an identity in order to become a civilised and glorious nation. In order to create a civilised and illustrious nation, the dynamic nation of Malaysia requires an identity, thus as a society, we must protect and defend our nation's sovereignty. Each party is responsible for ensuring the protection of our nation's sovereignty. We should not squander the sacrifices and efforts of our ancestors who fought for our nation's independence and sovereignty. The maintenance of national sovereignty depends on the manner in which our society fights for our liberty. The continuation of patriotism as well as the maximum appreciation of Malaysia's independence history to be nurtured and instilled among the younger generation, allowing Malaysia to exist as a strong country in politics, economy, social and socio-culture.

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