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# **The Old and New Malaya of Colonial Days and Its Continuity in the Modern Day Malaysia**

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# OBJECTIVE



- **To explore the uneven development of Malaya in the 19 & early 20 century which created Old and New Malaya and the similar situation which continued to exist during the post-independence Malaya.**



# SCOPE



- **From August until December when its leaders were arrested under ISA.**
  
- **The views expressed by the paper will be evaluated based on;**
  - **its editorials,**
  - **articles by academics,**
  - **feature articles by Utusan journalists**
  - **views from the man in the street (through e-mails and SMSses)**
  - **News Reports**
  - **views of Barisan National leaders**
  - **views from Opposition Political Parties**



# **WHY UTUSAN MALAYSIA?**



- **Has a wide circulation among the Malay readers (300,000 copies per day).**
- **Important from historical perspective.**
- **The only paper strongly articulates Malay interest. Wields great influence on government policy.**



# HISTORY OF HINDRAF





- **Formed December 2005- reaction to a number of incident which offended the religious sensitivities of the Hindus:**
  - **demolition of temples**
  - **reaction to the burial of Moorthy the 1997 Everest project member, according to Muslim rites.**



- **Some 48 Indian NGOs met and decided to set up a body/organisation primarily to oppose unfair religious conversions, demolition of Hindu temples and shrines and to champion the rights of marginalised Indians.**
- **The Malaysian public came to know about Hindraf in August 2007 when it submitted an 18 point memorandum to the Government on 12 August 2007 .**
- **On 31 August 2007, P.Waytha Moorthy, a Hindraf lawyer, filed a symbolic class action suit against the United Kingdom in a court of Britain.**



# **EDITORIAL STAND**



- **The editorials appear either under the Editorial column or under “Awang Selamat”.**
- **Both news reflect the paper’s stand.**
- **Malay sentiments could be gauged through the editorial columns, especially the brief column by Awang Selamat.**
- **Platform to create public opinion or for people in power to gauge Malay sentiments.**



- **It is clear from the stand taken by its editor and through Awang Selamat column, the paper objected in total the movement and its goal.**
- **Although at the beginning the editor was objective in its reporting but it was not the same with Awang Selamat.**
- **His stand were more racial and were not willing to see the emergence of Hindraf in a broader perspective.**



# ACADEMIC VIEWS



- **Highlighted the views of academics with regard to Hindraf's claims and anti government demonstration.**
- **Academics hailed from institution of higher learning and think-tank groups.**
- **Views were highlighted in the wake of the demonstrations as well as when the leaders were arrested under ISA.**



- **A similar pattern in their writings. All of them failed to address the real issues.**
- **No one dared to mention the 18 point memorandum submitted by Hindraf to the Prime Minister and probe why such a movement came to exist and had the support of a majority of Indians (mainly Tamils) from all walks of life.**
- **Took a stand to hit hard at Hindraf for being racial, in line with the government's view. This is unacceptable from academics who should be objective in their views.**





- **Should have highlighted larger issues of poverty and unmindful development policies pursued over many decades.**
- **There is failure to explain the existence of poverty amongst a minority community that had not only been the backbone of the nations economic prosperity for well over a century, but had also been consistent in lending support to the ruling government.**
- **Failure on the part of the so-called intellectuals in bringing to bear humanistic and internationally accepted standards of justice.**



# **OPPOSITION VIEWS – OUTSIDE AND WITHIN**



- **Published views of the opposition, mainly from political parties like DAP, PAS and PKR.**
- **Their views were against the stand of the Government and more objective than those of the academics, the editorials and the politicians from the Government side.**



- **The fact that the paper published the views of the opposition parties, as well as dissenting views within Barisan Nasional (although these views were attacked in the editorials) does show some level of openness on the part of the Utusan.**



# **BARISAN NATIONAL LEADERS**



- **Aired the views of the BN leaders from the day Hindraf submitted the memorandum to BN until they were arrested under ISA.**
- **The views were meant to build such public opinion as subsequently justified their arrests.**
- **Only highlighted views of UMNO leaders which were against Hindraf and no attempt to analyse what led to the emergence of the movement and the 18 point memorandum submitted by Hindraf.**



# **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**



- **The stand taken by the paper was also evidenced in letters to the editor from August until the end of December. All the letters were against Hindraf, and none of them sought to investigate the reasons for the emergence of Hindraf.**
- **The agenda was to portray Hindraf as treacherous. None of the letters probed into the reasons for the emergence of Hindraf.**





# **FEATURE ARTICLES**



- **Published a number of feature articles written by journalists from the Utusan to give a broader understanding of the issue. Unfortunately almost all of them were slanted and portray Hindraf in a bad light.**
- **Feature articles were slanted and were not well researched. The writers made sweeping statements which were racial in nature.**



# **DAILY REPORTS/ NEWS REPORT**



- **Published daily news pertaining to many issues relating to Hindraf. This was done without being judgmental.**
- **By reading the reports one could deduce that something was not right with the Government policy and the role of MIC in addressing Indian problems.**
- **Such reports do tell the truth and make the earlier write-up and comments by the editorial sound baseless.**



# CONCLUSION



- **Utusan Malaysia was not objective in its reporting. It had an agenda of its own which came to light in the editorial column, feature articles, statements by Barisan National leaders and academic views.**
- **Having said that there seems to be a contradiction between the news reports published. The news reports did highlight the views of the opposition parties, and opposition factions within Barisan National.**



- **Allowed the readers to see the both sides of the coin. One cannot understand the contradiction between news report and the feature articles, editorial column and views from academics.**
- **Another factor that puts the paper in a bad light is when it also published reports about initiatives taken by the government to address Indian problems after the Hindraf leaders were arrested under ISA.**



- **The views highlighted by the paper through the academics were unacceptable. Academics were not willing to probe the issue as any respectable individual would normally would have done.**
- **Not even one academic was brave enough to list the 18 point memorandum and argue the validity objectively.**





- **Utusan Malaysia failed to play the role of objective reporting from the day Hindraf came to light until they were arrested under the ISA.**



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