

## **Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) and the Autonomous Rights of Sabah and Sarawak in Historical Context and GE-14**

### **ABSTRACT**

The autonomous rights of the states of Sabah and Sarawak certainly became the main political issue that had long been voiced by the politicians of those states in all general and state elections. These autonomous rights is generally interpreted as the impression that those states possess higher status than other states in the Peninsular Malaysia as stipulated in the Federal Constitution and Malaysia Agreement of 1963(MA63). This issue was used for highlighting grievances in relations to the situation in those states that are still left behind in developmental aspect compared to the states in the peninsula. It is further claimed that the large proportion of the sources and revenues of those states are not enjoyed by them. In fact, this view is also utilized as the claim of violation on MA63 as it can be found in the manifesto and political statements during the 14th General Election (GE-14). Accordingly, the Pakatan Harapan (Hope Alliance) proclaimed to restore the status of Sabah and Sarawak in accordance with MA63. Parti Warisan Sabah then also proclaimed that they claim the right from the federal government as stipulated in the constitution and MA63. Thus, this article aims to discuss the extent of which the questions of the rights of Sabah and Sarawak which are legitimized by MA63 conform to historical context associated with current situation. This discussion is based on legal history framework with reference to MA63 and its relevance to the issues highlighted in the manifesto and political statements during the GE-14. Based on this framework, it can be identified that MA63 which had been exploited in GE-14 was merely a political rhetoric. This is because the understanding towards MA63 had been applied in anachronistic manner due to the complexity in relating the historical document and event to contemporary context.