STRIVING FOR *BANGSA MALAYSIA*
A STUDY ON MALAYSIA'S PERCEPTION ON RELIGION AND RACE, RELIGIOUS HARMONY AND NATIONAL UNITY

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CENTER FOR
INSIGHTS IN
SURVEY
RESEARCH

Striving for *Bangsa Malaysia*: A Study on Malaysia's Perception on Religion and Race, Religious Harmony and National Unity

Executive Summary

In early 2019, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and its local partner, IMAN Research (IMAN) embarked on a study to understand and promote religious freedom and national unity in Malaysia through good governance and advocacy. Both parties wished to obtain an insight on the interlinkages between a person's race and religion with their sense of identity and belonging as a Malaysian. In Malaysia, race relations and religiosity are immensely delicate issues that have continued to influence the nation building process of the country since its independence in 1957. Although significant attempts have been made to unite Malaysians under a common identity (*Bangsa Malaysia),* Malaysian society has primarily been divided along ethnic and religious lines. Hence, this study was mooted to investigate why race and religion remain contentious, especially in a New Malaysia, which in 2018, saw a change in government.

In April 2019, IMAN conducted eight focus group discussions (FGDs) for this project. These FGDs were held in Kuala Lumpur, Johor, Kelantan and Perlis, with two held in Sarawak and Sabah respectively. A total of 56 individuals throughout the country participated in the FGDs, and they were aged 18 and older, of any gender, class, employment and marital status, all of whom were residing in one of the six aforementioned states. Participants were asked questions that examined aspects of religious freedom, racial discrimination, media use and violent extremism in Malaysia.

Some of the general statements expressed by the participants were:

- A few participants had expressed that they felt intolerance (in Malaysia) was not outright, but subtle. Participants acknowledged that it existed, nonetheless.

- It was agreed that the situation in the Peninsular was different from the realities of Sabah and Sarawak, especially in terms of racial relations and religion. It was perceived that in West Malaysia racism was more prevalent, and it was obvious that people were divided along ethnic lines.

- There was also an observation that non-Muslims had to always behave in a manner which accommodated their Muslim counterparts., and this inequality unsettled them. Respondents relied on social media and the Internet as the main medium for obtaining news and information. All the FGDs revealed a lack of trust in the media, with respondents mentioning that each source had their own agenda and attempted to push a particular viewpoint. As such, respondents preferred to collate information from various sources before forming their own conclusion.

- Participant responses varied when asked if religion was linked to violent extremism. While many of them agreed that religion in general was peaceful and promoted tolerance, some participants conceded that religion itself had been misunderstood, misinterpreted and misappropriated by certain people for their own agendas.

The overall findings gleaned from this study assisted IRI and IMAN in obtaining the pulse of the citizenry, primarily the youth, on issues of race, religion, tolerance, national unity, and the overarching concept of nationhood. It will subsequently enable the research team to present a comprehensive set of findings to relevant government and community stakeholders that have been

tasked with implementing policies on national unity. Additionally, the data should also be useful in planning and strategizing for the youth symposium that is expected to be held in Malaysia in September 2019.

Overview

Methodology

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A total of eight FGDs were conducted throughout April 2019 and have been fully analysed. We chose FGDs as a method of study as they are a simple and effective way for researchers to collect participant responses towards a particular topic in a group setting. FGDs are designed to explore people's perceptions, views, and understanding of a particular topic. This approach is important and allows for researchers to find new information based on groupthink. The method for this study involves organising 90-120-minute sessions between six to eight participants mediated by two facilitators. The purpose of the facilitator is to manage the discussion and provide the group with questions or topics to respond to. The group then answers in a round-robin style or discusses questions amongst themselves with little to no input from the facilitators. The facilitators' job is also to ensure that the discussion is kept on topic, moderate the discussion by encouraging more passive participants to contribute, and probe certain emerging topics that may be of interest. FGDs also allow researchers to learn about the participants' views on a subject directly and through their interaction with others.

In this group setting, none of the participants knew each other or have participated in an in-depth study twelve months prior to the FGD. If the members of the group shared similar traits and qualities (race, gender, class, etc.), they would be more likely to share their views on the issue as the other participants may support or add to their own arguments. On the other hand, in a mixed group, opposing views may cause some participants to limit their participation and to keep quiet on more sensitive issues. In rare cases, open disagreements may occur as multiple contrasting ideas cannot be reconciled. In either case, these interactions provide invaluable information to researchers as they will be able to determine what are the common topics for certain groups of people and what are clashing ideas for others. This information is used to determine what subjects are relevant to different groups of society and how different demographics of youths can develop different viewpoints on race and religion in Malaysia.

To retrieve the necessary data for this project, a discussion guide was created, requiring many exchanges between IRI and IMAN - whereby aspects of religious freedom, racial descrimination, media use and violent extremism in Malaysia were all taken into consideration. The guide began as an in-depth document with many questions and sub-questions but by the time the FGDs were conducted,the project had been refined to be a concise and more time-saving version of the original document (both documents can be found in the appendix). The demographic target were all Malaysian youths, aged 18 and older, of any gender, class, employment and marital status, all of whom were residents of where the FGDs were conducted. The terms for participation for this study was that each of the eight sessions would be audio-recorded, and participants would remain anonymous as their personal data would not be published, and that they were allowed to leave at any time. The sessions were established as safe spaces where each participant was encouraged to

talk candidly and freely about their feelings about race and religion in their respective resident states without fear of judgment from others. As many of the participants were bilingual, the sessions were conducted in either English and Bahasa Melayu, although many would code-switch between the two languages. Participants were also asked to sign consent forms indicating that they understood the terms of the study. Each participant was also provided RM50 for their participation as well as light refreshments.

IMAN has attempted to ensure that the participation in each FGD session reflected the demographic distributions (age, gender and occupation) and political identities of each selected location. In all locations, IMAN recruited participants through the use of social media communication, targeting local colleges, universities, places of worship and organizations, as well as personal contacts linked to local communities. For sessions in Sarawak and Sabah, IMAN also contacted participants through local community groups with a specific emphasis on cultural and ethnic appreciation, hobby-driven groups and students from local religious groups, all of which responded positively. In the locations where the volume of social media users are significantly lower (i.e. Tawau and Miri), IMAN researchers made an effort to arrive two days in advance to communicate directly with youths in an attempt to recruit them.

THE IRI FGD Sessions of 2019

As mentioned earlier, IMAN conducted eight FGDs for this project, which were held in Kuala Lumpur, Johor, Kelantan, Perlis, Sarawak, and Sabah. A total of 56 participants throughout the country participated in the FGDs, allowing us to achieve the targeted number of respondents for this study (the FGDs required a minimum of 48 participants and a maximum of 64 participants). An overview of the demographics has helped in deciding the makeup of the FGD groups per locality and a detailed description of each selected area is listed below along with a brief statement of the respective current political landscape. This is then followed by a table, listing the FGD group areas and the types of demographics targeted for each area (refer to table 1).

SABAH

Kota Kinabalu

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Kota Kinabalu at 452,058. The gender ratio in Kota Kinabalu is 1.04. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (240,384). It is also noted that there is a large number of non-citizens living in Kota Kinabalu (110,556). The median household income of Kota Kinabalu for 2016 was MYR 7043. In the 14th General Election (GE14), the majority of voters in Kota Kinabalu (56.3%) voted for the Democratic Action Party (DAP) under *PH*.

Tawau

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Tawau at 397,673. The gender ratio in Tawau is 1.05. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (185,897). There is a large number of non-citizens living in Tawau (164,729). The median household income of Tawau for 2016 was MYR 5,254. In GE14, the majority of voters in Tawau (35.7%) voted for *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR) under PH.

SARAWAK

Kuching

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Kuching at 1,267,311. The gender ratio in Kuching is 1.04. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (185,897), followed by the Chinese (364,823) and Indians (78,054). The median household income of Kuching for 2016 was MYR 6,281. In GE14, the majority of the voters in Kuching (59.3%) voted for DAP under PH.

Miri

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Miri at 353,157. The gender ratio in Miri is 1.15. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (236,622), followed by the Chinese (81,977). It is noted that there is a sizeable population of non-citizens living in Miri (31,408). The median household income of Miri for 2016 was MYR 5,387. During GE14, the majority of the voters in Miri (44.5%) voted for PKR under PH.

GREATER KLANG VALLEY

Kuala Lumpur

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Kuala Lumpur at 1,588,750. The gender ratio in Kuala Lumpur is 1.04. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (661,003), followed closely by the Chinese (621,805), and then the Indians (148,300). There is also a large population of non-citizens living in Kuala Lumpur (148,592). The median household income of Kuala Lumpur for 2016 was MYR 11,692. During GE14, the majority of the voters in Kuala Lumpur (41.5%) voted for PKR under PH.

NORTHERN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

Kota Bharu in Kelantan

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Kota Bharu at 468,438. The gender ratio in Kota Bharu is 0.99. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (434,917), followed by the Chinese (22,444). The median household income of Kota Bharu for 2016 was MYR 4,214. In GE14, the majority of the voters in Kota Bharu (31.9%) voted for *Parti Se-Islam Malaysia* (PAS).

Kangar in Perlis

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimated the population of Perlis at 252,200. The gender ratio in Perlis is 1.01. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (214,370), followed by the Chinese (18,915) and then the Indians (3,027). The median household income of Perlis for 2016 was MYR 4,204. In GE14, the majority of the voters in Kangar (37.4%) voted for PKR under PH. The population data of the state of Perlis is provided here due to the lack of data for the city of Kangar.

SOUTHERN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

Johor Bahru in Johor

The 2016 Malaysian Census Report estimates the population of Johor Bahru at 1,334,188. The gender ratio in Johor Bahru is 1.13. The city's population is a mixture of many different races; the majority being the *Bumiputera* (634,153), followed by the Chinese (456,112) and then the Indians (120,683). The median household income of Johor Bahru for 2016 was MYR 8,198. The majority of voters in Johor Bahru (59.3%) voted for PKR under PH during GE14.

The breakdown of participants in this study were as follows:

Group	Location	FGD Demographics	Description
1	Tawau in Sabah	Mixed gender and mixed religion participants	Rural, majority non-Muslim area, some inter-ethnic tensions exist but no issues with mixed groups
2	Kota Kinabalu in Sabah	Mixed gender and non-Muslim participants only	Urban, majority non-Muslim area, some inter-ethnic tensions exist but no issues with mixed groups
3	Miri in Sarawak	Mixed gender and non-Muslim participants only	Semi-urban, majority non-Muslim area
4	Kuching in Sarawak	Mixed gender and mixed religion participants	Urban, majority non-Muslim area
5	Johor Bahru in Johor	Mixed gender and mixed religion participants	Urban, majority Muslim, no issues conducting mixed gendered FGDs in the past
6	Kota Bharu in Kelantan	Mixed gender and Muslim participants only	Urban, majority Muslim but no issues conducting mixed gendered FGDs in the past
7	Kuala Lumpur city	Mixed gender and mixed religion participants	Urban, majority Muslim, no issues conducting mixed gendered FGDs in the past

8	Kangar in Perlis	Mixed gender and mixed religion participants	Semi-urban, majority Muslim, no issues conducting mixed gendered FGDs in the past

Table 1: List of FGD and participation demographic.

Context

Today, Malaysia is home to a population of 31 million people, of which the majority (60%) are the Malay *Bumiputera* ('sons of the soil'). The Chinese are the second largest community (20%), followed by the Indians (6%). The remainder consists of other races that include a significant population of East Malaysians, as well as non-citizens. The Malay majority predominantly follows the Sunni denomination of Islam, which is the official religion of the Federation. Meanwhile, the rights of other races and faiths are guaranteed under the Federal Constitution.

Despite it all, race relations and religiosity are immensely delicate issues that have defined the very social fabric of Malaysia since its independence in 1957. For a country that boasts a melting pot of cultures, a person's race or religion is closely intertwined with their sense of identity and belonging. While significant attempts have been made to unite Malaysians under a common identity (*Bangsa Malaysia)* with the Malay language as a common medium of instruction, society has foremost been divided along ethnic and religious lines. In general terms, Malaysia has witnessed a successful period of economic growth since its inception, enjoying relative peace and security within its borders. However, underneath the many layers of development is a long and painful history of ethno-religious tensions that have boiled over on occasion, first with the May 13 riots in 1969 that saw longstanding hostilities between the Malay and Chinese communities come to a head. The riots are to date the deadliest incident of ethnic violence in the country, with official figures placing the number of deaths and injured victims at 196 and 439 respectively, although unofficial sources suggest a much higher body count. The riots forced the resignation of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, and a state of emergency was declared. His successor Tun Abdul Razak embarked on a long-term national reconciliation plan that culminated in the introduction of the *Rukun Negara* (National Principles) and a revolutionary albeit controversial New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP aimed to eliminate nationwide poverty and race-based economic function, but was ultimately perceived as favouring the *Bumiputera* over other races.

The relationship among the various races has remained cagey over the years. In July 2015, a straightforward case of theft at the Low Yat Plaza in Kuala Lumpur's popular Bukit Bintang district descended into a racially charged brawl after rumours circulated online that a young Malay man had been conned into buying a counterfeit phone by a Chinese trader. More recently in November 2018, a dispute over the relocation of a Hindu temple in Seafield USJ resulted in violent confrontations that lasted several days as individuals seeking a demolishment of the temple clashed with another group protesting the temple's relocation. The riots caused the tragic death of a young fireman, Muhammad Adib Mohammad Kassim, as well as significant damage to property and vehicles. Muhammad Adib's death was subsequently exploited by certain parties that claimed the incident was racially motivated and demanded that justice be served. The often-abrupt way in

which these incidents have taken on ethno-religious connotations illustrate the fragility of race relations in Malaysia.

The government's ongoing efforts to maintain peace and harmony among the diverse communities have largely come in the form of blanket warnings prohibiting actions and statements that may incite racial or religious hatred. Meanwhile, it has continued to shy away from addressing the deep-seated fears and dissatisfactions of a growingly disillusioned populace. Much of this is related to the overarching Malay-Muslim supremacy and the special rights and privileges of the *Bumiputera* in the areas such as education, employment, and housing.

But in 2018, there was a sudden shift in the tide. The general election that took place on May 9 dealt a shocking defeat to the *Barisan Nasional* (BN) coalition that had ruled the country since independence. Instead, voters gave *Pakatan Harapan* (PH) led by Malaysia's former and longest serving Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, a resounding victory in the polls. It was a watershed moment as people fawned over 'New Malaysia' while revelling in the rebirth of its democratic ideals. One year on, however, the euphoria has settled and the cracks are once again visible.

The new government's inexperience coupled with the perception that it is abandoning the Malay-Muslim agenda have exacerbated racial and religious divisiveness in the country. PH also has to contend with an increasingly isolationist approach by its political opponents the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) and PAS, which have forged an unlikely alliance to rally maximum support for the Malay-Muslim agenda. This approach is resonating with the Malay heartland, as evidenced by the widespread pushback against the government's decision in late 2018 to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). Following a public rally orchestrated by the UMNO-PAS alliance in December, the government was subsequently forced to renege on ratifying the United Nations (UN) convention. The rejection of ICERD stemmed mainly from fears that it would affect the special position of the Malays as enshrined under Article 153 of the Federal Constitution, and the status of Islam as the official religion. Similar fear-mongering tactics, this time by sections of the Malaysian Royalty, were used to halt Malaysia from acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in March 2019. Members of the Royal family in the state of Johor accused the treaty of violating the Constitution and jeopardizing the position of the monarchy, who could purportedly be prosecuted for war crimes by the ICC in their capacity as heads of state.

These incidents, which have all occurred in less than a year of PH rule, have further undermined racial and religious tolerance in Malaysia. Observers argue that while a change of government has had a positive impact in the interim, it has also opened the floodgates to political and social discord that have further polarised the nation. An annual report released by *Pusat KOMAS* (KOMAS Centre) in March this year detailed that racial discrimination was still prevalent in 'New Malaysia', especially in the education, property, and employment sectors. The report also highlighted that deep-seated racism was most prevalent on social media, where a sense of anonymity allowed people to openly spew racial hatred. Similarly, another recent study conducted by online market research firm Vase.ai found that many Malaysians believe the country is headed towards a repeat of the deadly May 13 riots due to the flaring up of racial and religious issues in the current political climate.

Despite an increase in media freedoms under the PH government, there continues to be a certain level of self-censorship exercised by media organizations especially when involving sensitive topics like race, religion and the Royalty. There is also the additional challenge of regulating media consumption in the age of social media, where 'fake news' and cyberbullying are rampant. According to CyberSecurity Malaysia (CSM), Malaysians increasingly prefer to obtain information from social media rather than actual news sites. This increases their risk of being exposed to unverified rumours and fake news, which are shared far and wide well before they can be fact-checked. As such, improved consumption and access to information online has not necessarily translated into greater media literacy among Malaysians.

Violent extremism is yet another hot issue as the ideology of terrorist organizations like the Islamic State (ISIS) have seeped into local consciousness, especially among segments of disenfranchised and disillusioned communities. The current socio-economic instability and grievances among certain groups are also being exploited by ISIS to recruit more followers to its cause. Central to ISIS' appeal is the notion that Muslims around the world are under siege, and a similar narrative has emerged in Malaysia - with the promotion of supposedly more liberal values and growing support for minorities such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community - that are deemed to violate Islamic teachings. There are grave concerns that ultra-conservative or right-wing groups may be provoked to retaliate using violence against what they perceive to be an open attack on the sanctity of Islam.

Meanwhile, over in East Malaysia there is a stark disconnect with events taking place in the Peninsular. The concerns of East Malaysians lie within an entirely different set of issues, often pertaining to the special rights and guarantees accorded to Sabah and Sarawak under the Malaysia Agreement of 1963 (MA63). The two territories were integral partners in the formation of Malaysia and enjoy autonomy on immigration. Additionally, Sarawak customarily holds elections for its 82-seat state assembly separately from the rest of the country. However, the population of these states, which comprise a myriad of ethnic groups, have long felt that they have been side-lined by their counterparts from the Peninsular in terms of development and representation at the Federal level. As such, there is a long-standing distrust among Sabahans and Sarawakians towards their countrymen from the West, worsened by the fact that the 'orang Semenanjung' (a label for people from the Peninsular) are often ignorant about the Borneo lands and cultures. Political factionalism is another issue dividing both regions as there are major differences between political parties in West and East Malaysia. The latter have typically resented 'meddling' by Peninsular politicians into its affairs, while certain political parties and its leaders are altogether banned from entering Sabah and Sarawak.

Apart from that, Sabah particularly has a long history of problems linked to irregular migrants from southern Philippines, who fled there to escape the violence and economic deprivation back home. Decades later, these Filipinos have married locals and fully assimilated with Sabahan society. Yet, many of them continue to live without any residency documents from the Malaysian government and are treated with hostility by native Sabahans who blame them for the social ills plaguing Sabah. The state's indegenous peoples also view the presence of Filipino migrants as a threat to their livelihood and culture. This entire issue is enveloped by the fact that there has generally been 'bad blood' between both communities due to the Philippines' protracted claim over Sabah, which the former claims was traditionally part of the Sulu sultanate within the Malay Archipelago.

In Sarawak, meanwhile, a movement to restore the state's status as equal partners under MA63 has gained momentum since 2013. Nicknamed 'Sarawak for Sarawakians (S4S)', it has radically promoted the idea of gaining independence or seceding from Malaysia, fueled on by feelings of severe neglect and unfair treatment by the Federal Government. Although such calls have ultimately been sporadic due to their potentially seditious nature, the general sentiments espoused by S4S have resonated among many Sarawakians and fostered an 'us' versus 'them' mentality. As a result, the movement has evolved into a nationalistic struggle that has only increased factionalism and divisiveness - firstly between S4S proponents and Sarawakians who wish to remain a part of Malaysia, and secondly between East and West Malaysia.

Findings

A discussion guide was created by IRI to facilitate discussions for the focus groups. The initial guide was an in-depth document with many questions and sub-questions. Issues such as religious freedom, racial descrimination, media use and violent extremism in Malaysia were incorporated. However, after the first FGD in Tawau was conducted, the document was further refined to ensure that it was concise, timesaving, and the questions could be easily understood by the participants.

Data gathered from the FGDs are broken down into six broad categories as outlined below:

i. Most Important Issue Facing the Country

Based on the questionnaire approved by IRI, participants of the first FGD in Tawau were asked their opinion on what they perceived to be the most important issue facing Malaysia today. Answers given by the participants varied and virtually none of their responses were related to the topic of the FGD, which focused on the issue of religious harmony and national unity. In hindsight, the question should have been more specific and formulated in a way that geared the responses of the participants towards the topic of the FGD. This question was removed from the subsequent FGDs conducted as the scope of the question was deemed too broad to glean any meaningful data.

ii. Interaction with Others from Different Backgrounds

Participants were asked whether they have ever interacted with people from different races or religions and to describe those interactions. While many stated that they had no problems interacting with people from different backgrounds, two participants from Kuala Lumpur interestingly admitted that they did not socialize with people from outside their own communities prior to their enrolment into university.

"From when I was a kid until I've grown up, I've lived in a Malay *kampung* (village) and I am from an Islamic background, so since I was small until before I got into university, I have never interacted with anyone from a different race and religion." - Rohaya*, 25, Kuala Lumpur

"I come from the Chinese community, and mostly mingle around with only Chinese friends. But when I entered the university - and my university is mostly

Malay - then I started to mingle around with (other) friends there." - Thomas*, 22, Kuala Lumpur

Participants generally agreed that sensitive issues such as ethnicity and religion are not discussed when spending time with friends of different races or faiths to avoid discord or disrupting unity.

"We often hang out, but we avoid (talking about) religious issues. For me, my religion is my religion, his religion is his religion." - Hairul*, 29, Tawau

"I have Chinese and Indian friends but, in our conversations, we don't talk about religion." - Hisham*, 18, Kota Bharu

iii. <u>Religion</u>

Participants felt that religion was an important concept in Malaysia. Participants described religion as a belief system which people ascribe to. They regard religion as an integral part of daily life, as all religions are seen to encourage peace, goodness, harmony and tolerance; acting as a guiding tool and providing a framework on how individuals should conduct themselves as well as how to treat others.

"Even though we have many religions, there's only one purpose - to learn to love and respect each other. But the misconception people have nowadays is that my religion is correct, and yours is definitely wrong. 'You are not on the right path, we don't like you', something like that... We have religion because we want moral values that teach us to respect and to love other people." - Radley*, 30, Miri

"I believe all religions teach us to do good things." - Faizal*, 29, Kuala Lumpur

"... an important concept in Malaysia because our country is multiracial and very diverse. Every race has the way of life and religion that they held onto." – Shaiful*, 27, Johor

"Religion is important because religion can control our lives. As a believer, all religion tells us to be good." – Elly*, 24, Kota Kinabalu

"... it is important to have a certain religion, because number one, it would remind us to do good to others, to be more respectful to others. And the second thing would be a way of saying that to create a society to live (harmoniously) with one another, we have to be more respectful, accepting towards one another. So yes, it acts as a reminder." - Sunny*, 26, Kota Kinabalu

A participant in Miri, Sarawak stated there should be a separation between religion and the state, and that religion should not be used as a political tool to govern the people. Religion should remain in the domain of people's private lives.

"I do believe in individual rights, it should not be imposed on other people and I do believe in the separation of church and state...religion should not be used

to govern other people, especially in the group of people that is multi-religion." - Ramsey*, 28, Miri

However, participants observed that it is quite typical for religion to be weaponized by politicians to further their own interests. Religion is often used as a means to garner votes. Politicians in Malaysia are known to pit certain religious or ethnic groups against each other for this purpose.

"It's easy to control when people are divided as compared to when people are united." - Jamiliah*, 23, Johor Bahru

"So, it (the politicization of religion) is a thing like that - to create something, to get something. That's what I see. They look down on other religions. And not just religion, but also other ethnicities or races." - Alicia*, 24, Kota Kinabalu

"... about the race and religion issue in the country, the first thing I notice is how political parties and their members use these issues to garner support, votes. I think they like to harp on racial or religious sentiments, politicizing religion or race." - Zul*, 24, Tawau

The politicization of religion is a common phenomenon in Malaysia, especially during elections. Certain quarters tend to manipulate ethno-religious sentiments, using the premise that their identity is under attack. Cybertroopers are known to exacerbate these situations, taking the opportunity to sow discord within the masses. One participant pointed out that it is not uncommon to have cybertroopers create different accounts (to represent different individuals of different ethnicities) and create a situation where these two "individuals" are having a spat. Netizens take sides and this usually creates real prejudice and tension on the ground as it seems as though one ethnic group is fighting with another.

For some, the politicization of race is linked with power which determines the distribution of resources related to oil royalties, as pointed out by a respondent in Miri.

"… the root of Sarawak for Sarawakians is actually rooted in MA63 actually. Because what belongs to us is not given to us *lah*, and to be exact it is the oil royalty issue. A friend of mine from the Peninsular asked that why is a state so rich in petroleum being classified as one of the poorest in Malaysia - it is not logical, right? The problem is rooted in MA63, I think it's not about race, it's about money, and we want some percentage, a relevant percentage given back to us." – Zakir*, 30, Miri

Malaysian politics is very much divided along ethnic lines. Most political parties are representative of ethnic groups and cater to the interests of those respective ethnicities. A participant in Kota Kinabalu noted that politicians in office should be impartial and treat everyone equally, regardless of ethnicity, religion or political beliefs.

"For me, religion being politicised is actually happening. It's an irony. Politics should be about helping people no matter what their ethnicity or religion is. Religion should lead people to have good moral values that they must

practise, doesn't matter what the religion is. All religions want us to be good. It's ironic when people use religion and politics for self-interest and for their community's interest." - Alicia*, 24, Kota Kinabalu

Participants generally agreed that no religion promotes violence and that religiously linked violent extremism was due to the lack of religious knowledge and understanding. Religion is perceived to have been misinterpreted and misused by certain people to further their own agendas. One participant stated that,

"... if religion is the cause of terrorism, the suffering in the world, no. The cause of this would be the result of ignorance, the result of anger, the result of politics, money, the result of peer pressure." - Chris*, 26, Kota Kinabalu

"So [religion] has been wrongly used by individuals. It is not the narrative of every religion, but some people are quoting it, or using it as an agenda for their own terms, to justify themselves." - Ramsey*, 28, Miri

Participants also acknowledge that violent extremism is not exclusive to Islam but also occurs in other religions too.

"They just like misconception, where they take some of the phrases, let's say from the Bible and they just take it literally." - Alicia* 24, Kota Kinabalu

iv. *Bangsa* (Race)

Based on their respective geographical locations, participants were asked to describe three different ethnic groups; one ethnic group which was common in their area and two others that were not common. In general, participants are able to talk about certain ethnic groups with some authenticity. Participants from West Malaysia seemed to have no clue as to the different ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak. Whereas East Malaysians have a better understanding of ethnic groups because that forms the primary part of their identity.

Only two participants in Kota Kinabalu defined *bangsa* as nation and used the term to signify a larger, overarching identity. In East Malaysia, people commonly identify themselves using ethnicity, whereas in West Malaysia the term used is race.

"Since we were young, we've been told that our race is *Bangsa Malaysia*. That's our race." - Abby*, 23, Kota Kinabalu

"Our race is one, *Bangsa Malaysia*. That is our race." - Sunny*, 26, Kota Kinabalu

It was observed that most participants could not define ethnicity, race or *bangsa* accurately. The Malaysian education system and society in general do not really discuss the differences between these terms, hence the confusion on the part of the participants as they tended to conflate those terms to mean the same thing.

Participants perceived the notion of *bangsa* to be a fundamental concept in the country because it is part of individual identity, and believe that it should promote diversity and understanding, in addition to being something that should be celebrated instead of made into a divisive instrument.

Some participants stated that they would ideally like Malaysians to identify themselves as Malaysians only, while others acknowledged that it would be impossible to achieve.

"We cannot just say, 'Yes, I am Malaysian'. It's so difficult for us to just say we're Malaysians. Because the terminology of a Malaysian Malaysia is very politicized already." - Ramsey*, 28, Miri

One participant in Kota Kinabalu said that people should view each other as human beings without attaching any other cultural markers.

"For me, it's nothing to do with religion and ethnicity. We don't see individuals, each person, no matter what the religion or race. We lack the sense to see people as a person. We always label them 'Muslim', 'Catholic', 'Chinese', 'Malay'. We always put a label on people. So why don't we promote a thing where we see people as humans? Then, of course, we can get to the realisation. For example, I am a Catholic, I didn't ask to be born to a Catholic family, but I am here now." – Alicia*, 24, Kota Kinabalu

Pertaining to the issue of race and intolerance, participants recognize the transitional phases on racist issues, in addition to noting intergenerational shifts in understanding race and stereotyping. It was observed that youths nowadays are less racist compared to their older counterparts and are more accommodating of differences between ethnic groups. It was deduced that the advent of social media has helped desensitize issues related to race and inculcate this understanding.

"My father's always thinks along the lines of 'don't bow to Malays', something like that, because he always thinks that (the Malays) are stepping on the Chinese right to be in Malaysia." - Albert*, 19, Miri

"... because I live in the age of social media, some sensitive stuff is really not sensitive. Even sometimes I think, when I say something nice, it doesn't mean that there is tolerance. On some levels, the mocking is hilarious. It's a joke, even racism becomes a joke. I think, the society in this era, Generation Z, we do joke around about that. We are more relaxed, and we don't have a racial problem." - Faizal*, 32, Johor Bahru

"... our level of tolerance is way higher in this generation and that we also know what kind of stereotype each race has. We are self-aware of each race's stereotypes and we joke about it. So, it's like we accept it as being this way. My parents' generation, they are very sensitive in this kind of stuff, but when it comes to this generation, we accept this kind of joke." - Kelvin*, 23, Johor Bahru

"... the meme era, where everyone starts to develop a sense of humour that we can share, just like he said, offensive jokes that do not become offensive. It becomes something that we can laugh together about. Ironic, isn't it?" - Iman*, 24, Johor Bahru

v. <u>Tolerance</u>

A few participants noted that Malaysia experiences a subtle intolerance problem. Although largely not manifested in an outright manner, participants acknowledge that it exists, nonetheless.

"I think deep inside everybody has a bit of this discomfort with other races or religion, it's just that they choose not to share it. If we say something, then you'll be like 'No, you are disturbing our harmony, no, don't say it', so then we become like, 'Oh, we just keep it inside." - Denise*, 28, Kuching

"Deep in the heart there's actually some sentiment there, they just don't say it openly." - Denise*, 28, Kuching

Participants observed the inequality when it comes to Islam versus other religions. It seems as though non-Muslims have to always behave in a manner which accommodates their Muslim counterparts.

"I think the most significant one was from a Muslim boy in primary school...this one time, we had lunch together and my mum packed me food containing pork. We were at the same table, but when he found out that my food had pork, and he was like, "*Eh, haram, nanti awak kena samak* (That's prohibited, you will have to purify yourself)". I have to *samak* you know, then only I can mingle with him...I practically *samak* myself...for the very innocent fact that, well he is my friend and I want to feel comfortable with him and I want him to feel comfortable with me." - Ramsey*, 28, Miri

"I feel non-Muslims tolerate a lot for Muslims, them being the majority. We understand and we respect that. Whatever it is, we feel that tolerance is not enough from their side to us." - Ramsey*, 28, Miri

The situation in the Peninsular is different than the realities of Sabah and Sarawak, especially in terms of racial relations and religion. It is perceived that in West Malaysia that racism is more prevalent, and it is obvious that people are divided along ethnic lines.

"For the past few times when I go to *Semenanjung* (the Peninsular), it's a really bad experience because I get discriminated without any reason." - Albert*,19, Miri

Participants in Sabah and Sarawak often highlight that they are of mixed heritage, stating that this helps in fostering understanding and acceptance.

"I do celebrate Chinese New Year, I do celebrate Gawai, and of course I would celebrate Raya with my friend. So there's no barrier, 'Oh you're Chinese, you're supposed to celebrate only this, only that.' I think it's completely bullshit, why you have to restrict yourself from celebration." - Raymond*, 22, Kuching

"Because in Sarawak, there's so many mixed marriages, you cannot assume what your religion is or sometimes your race. Sometimes they look like they wear *tudung* (headscarves) but they are actually Bidayuh." - Ella*, 29, Kuching

When asked to define the term 'tolerance', many described it as being respectful and the process of give and take. They generally felt that tolerance was a good thing. However, a participant in Tawau said that too much tolerance could be a bad thing as it could lead to corrosion of identity. Participants were also asked whether they were aware of any efforts done by individuals, groups, institutions or the government in a bid to foster tolerance in society.

Many were unaware of these efforts. A few participants ventured that the state and national governments would organize open houses for the masses to attend during festive seasons, while others mentioned initiatives by lecturers at the university who encourage group work consisting of members of different ethnicities.

FGD sessions in Kota Bharu and Kangar saw respondents linking the demographic make-up of society with levels of tolerance. One respondent suggested that the 'divide and conquer' approach might be effective as it prevents the minority group within an area from feeling resentment due to an imbalance in the distribution of resources.

Another suggested that it was more likely for intolerance to occur in areas where the proportion of groups were fairly even as both sides are trying to win. Otherwise, the minority would simply acclimatize to the majority.

"Tolerance from what I see, only happens in a place when there is one race which is the majority in the population. From my observations, toleration occurs in areas with a clear majority, for example, the Malay-Muslim population accounts for more than 90% of Kelantan. So, there are no collisions/clashes with the minority group.

Look at Sabah and Sarawak, they have Malays, Chinese and the nations of Sabah and Sarawak. Sothe Malays are a minority, and there are no problems with toleration there. But on the West Coast like in Perak, Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang. There are clashes because the population of other groups is almost equal to the Malays. Both groups want to win.

'You work at my place, I pay your salary, you have to listen to me'. For example, a Malay working in Chinese workplace has to follow the Chinese way and Chinese working in a Malay workplace has to follow the Malay way. There's less tolerance in areas where the population makeup is almost equal, but a different matter in areas with a clear majority. So, demography also plays an important role in tolerance." - Marzuki*, 28, Kota Bharu

A respondent in East Malaysia expressed fear of creeping ultra-Malay tendencies, something they deem foreign to Sabah and Sarawak.

"Just want to talk about one or two points about the seeping of ultra-Malay tendencies or Malay supremacy. It is strange, why, because we don't have any

Malay-based party over here - let's just say UMNO, we don't have UMNO over here. And then the second one is, I just want to say, why this is happening is because the one thing we have to answer now is whether accusations towards the non-Malays taking over this country is correct or not?" - Zakir*, 30, Miri

Vernacular schools are seen as an impediment to unity. It is perceived as segregating society. Typically, members of the Indian and Chinese communities would enrol their children in vernacular schools, whereas the Malays would send their children to national schools. This way, children are not exposed to other ethnic groups and tend to socialize with members of their own community even outside school. This pattern may well be brought into adulthood.

"For me, vernacular schools shouldn't have been established. With all these schools, the Chinese send their kids to the Chinese school (SJKC), the Indians to the Tamil school (SJKT) and the Malays to the national school (SK) - the people are divided. If we account for the years before independence and post-independence, it's almost a century so it's difficult to fix. I think it'll take a miracle." - Marzuki*, 28, Kota Bharu

vi. Media

Most participants agreed that media is very important as it can be used as an instrument to foster unity and tolerance. Alicia* from Kota Kinabalu said that,

"... (the) media role is important in developing tolerance because people nowadays trust the media. If we can use the media to promote peace and tolerance, and not promote negative stuff and brainwashing, people will get the point. Media is very important." - Alicia*, 24, Kota Kinabalu

Participants were then asked about their sources of information. Most respondents relied on social media and the Internet as the main medium for obtaining news and information, citing outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Others obtained information from news portals, news channels, parents, friends and also by word of mouth.

Findings from the FGDs revealed a lack of trust in the media, with respondents mentioning that each source has their own agenda and attempts to push a particular viewpoint. As such, respondents preferred to collate information from various sources (different sites, type of media or through friends) before forming their own conclusion.

"I gain information from the internet. But I'm not sure it is credible or not because all the sources nowadays you cannot just trust it totally." - Suzy*, 22, Kota Kinabalu

"I do not like stuff on social media. Most of them are not true. I prefer the news. The only news source I recommend is Astro Awani. I no longer trust the others because a lot of racism and a lot of it are not real - it's been exploited.' - James*, 23, Kota Kinabalu

Participants were asked to share their opinions on the *Rukun Negara* (National Principles) and whether they thought that it plays an integral role in nurturing tolerance amongst Malaysians. Many participants responded positively towards this line of questioning as the *Rukun Negara* is seen to be the bedrock of harmony and unity in the country.

"In Malaysia, we must follow what is written in the *Rukun Negara*. The first is, belief in God and after that, it is about tolerance with each other." - Hanif*, 27, Kota Bharu

"*Rukun Negara* is a guide for Malaysians. A patriotic song also mentioned the 5 principles of the *Rukun Negara*. But lately, loyalty to the king and the country is lacking, from the Malays and also other race.' - Hisham*, 18, Kota Bharu

Other participants, however, did not share the same sentiment. They were of the opinion that there is no real appreciation towards the *Rukun Negara* – it is mere lip service, something recited out loud at school during assemblies. The manifestation of the *Rukun Negara* is dependent on the individual, therefore ineffective as there are no official mechanisms in place to ensure that citizens live by them.

"The National Principles plays a big role in promoting tolerance in a multiracial, multi-religious Malaysia because the content portrays how to live in a nation, which is Malaysia. But the pros and cons depend on the individuals, whether they want to follow the principles or not." - James* 23, Kota Kinabalu

"'Yes, for those who embrace the Rukun Negara. But for some, Rukun Negara is just something to read during the (school) assembly." - Abby*, 23, Kota Kinabalu

> "… Our race is one, *Bangsa Malaysia*. That is our race." - Sunny*, 26, Kota Kinabalu

Zoom In - Our Analysis

Inter-ethnic tensions

One of the issues that participants had difficulty expressing openly about were on inter-ethnic tensions that were happening during the time of the FGDs. This was due to riots which took place in November of 2018 following disagreements over the relocation of a Hindu temple to a new site,

resulting in several people being injured as well as vehicles and properties damaged. The fracas had resulted in the death of a fireman of Malays descent which then led to a very public Legal Inquiry and with racial tensions felt throughout the country for many months following the event. Right wing groups have been quick to lay blame on the Indian-Hindu community on the death of the fireman which later led to many liberal and moderate Muslim groups to fight back, leading to higher levels of both intra and inter-ethnic and religious animosity. The FGD has revealed how each ethnic and religious group deals with social, economic and political insecurities in regard to their position and role in Malaysian society, in their own special way. Although there is a delicate balance in place among all the disparate groups, there still appears to be a noticeable and continuous lack of racial stability in the country. It is also important to note that in the initial preparation and later conducting the focus group discussions in the eight locations, IMAN faced some difficulty with recruitment leading to uneven group compositions that may have been exacerbated by these existing sensitivities.

Concerns Over the New Malaysian Government

It is apparent that many participants feel that Malaysia has a long way to go towards achieving racial and religious harmony and true equality among the different groups that make up the nation. Prior to the change of government, these issues have been controlled and regulated by the *Barisan Nasional* (BN) in an artificial top-down manner. Although this has been brought up by the current government as a mistake of the past, participants have yet to feel any constructive attempts or constructive national discussion on the topic. The belief is that the Malay-Muslim majority in the country has allowed them to be dominant in all aspects, leaving the minority groups under a "glass ceiling" with limited socio-political mobility. Further frustrations with the new Federal Government are also due to the way the Malay ethnic population, in particular, faced fracture, with significant in-fighting since the May 2018 election, which has been expressed by a number of participants.

East Malaysia vs West Malaysia

From the FGDs, it is apparent that a significant disconnect between the peninsula and the rest of the country exists. This can be understood in terms of social class in particular as well as relating to divides among education and employment status. Economic and class divides are starker in throughout the Peninsular in a way they are not in other parts of the country, leading to heightened tensions between east and west Malaysians. While many respondents from the peninsula (West Malaysia) have been honest in admitting their lack of knowledge about issues and communities from Sabah and Sarawak (East Malaysia), most of our respondents from Sabah and Sarawak tend to know more, economically, politically and socially about Malaysians living in west Malaysia, a clear indication that they have had to adapt to peninsula centric ideals from long ago.

Religion and violent extremism

While the nature of the discussions was civil, there were definitely some apprehension on the part of participants to deal with some of the more sensitive content of the discussion, such as on existing prejudice or their thoughts on violent extremism. Non-Muslim participants were very quick to deny any connection between religion, specifically Islam, and violent extremism in general, and while majority of the Muslim respondents also felt that Islam and religion should be liked, several Muslim respondents appreciated the possibility of these links and called for a more honest

approach to dealing with religiously motivated extremism. The Christchurch shooting that had taken place weeks prior to the FGDs were mentioned a few times in relation to the conversation and as a defence of Islam in relation to violent extremist acts. However, for the most part, the conversation (dominated by the Muslim respondents) would be centred on concerns of a Wahabi and Salafi uprising in Malaysia, which many non-Muslim respondents would be unfamiliar with.

<u>The Malaysian Media</u>

The FGDs reveal that throughout the country, there is a general rejection of what is perceived to be "traditional" media outlets and mediums (newsprint, television and radio) and a strong reliance on social media via smart devices. As new media consumers, participants have admitted that they are fairly media literate and seek out multiple sources on issues relating to race and religion. Nevertheless, there exists a subtle difference between respondents who are in their early to mid-20s; all of whom are dependent solely on their social media feed to access important news and happenings in the country, and respondents in their late 20s and early to mid-30s, who admit to still seeking out information from online news portals independently. The Twitter, Facebook and particularly YouTube comments section are sought out by participants as alternative sources to credible information and a space to gauge public perception on Malaysian matters. Indulging and on occasion, participating in the comment section has been said by respondents to be cathartic and an attempt at engaging in public discourse.

Conclusions

Since independence, racial and religious tensions in Malaysia have gradually become an institutionalized problem that runs deep among the various ethnic groups in Malaysia. They have been conditioned by politicians and a series of landmark national policies to identify with their in-groups first and as Malaysians second. Evidently, reversing mindsets that have been cultivated over decades will require time, resources, and most importantly political will among all stakeholders in society.

However, the FGDs conducted in this study indicate positive signs for the future. For one, the need to promote greater unity and to eliminate any form of racial and religious discrimination very much exists in the consciousness of the younger generation. While some responses did show weariness with the current state of the nation, participants were generally optimistic that the *Bangsa Malaysia* ideal could be achieved through tolerance, trust, and understanding. The one condition they stressed was that the country's leaders need to stop abetting the politics of race and religion, and instead spearhead national unity through more inclusive policies and open dialogue on previously 'taboo' subjects. For instance, many respondents felt that the PH government's decision to bow to pressure on ICERD and the Rome Statute was a regressive move. Any attempt to reconcile ingrained differences would therefore need to start with making the difficult choices and abandoning the interests of selected communities or groups in favour of a collective 'Malaysian Malaysia' agenda.

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Participants

Location of FGD	Alias	Age	Gender	Affiliation
1 **Tawau, SABAH** (Mixed Gender/Mixed Race-Religion)	Azmin	27	M	Media Assistance of MP for Tawau
	Hairul	30	M	Unemployed/Enrolling
	Crystal	18	F	Native Youth Council, KK
	Lily	35	F	Housewife / Asma'ul Husna Association
	Alan	34	M	Malaysian Relief Agency
	Zul	24	M	Borneo Komrad
	Aznil	24	M	Alternative Learning Center
	Razlan	18	M	Yayasan Dana Kebajikan Muslim (YDKM)
2 **Kota Kinabalu, SABAH** (Mixed Gender/ Non-Muslim Only)	Abby	23	F	Stella Maris Parish, KK
	Sunny	26	M	Good Shepherd Service, KK
	James	23	M	Calvary Family Center, KK
	Chris	23	M	Sacred Heart Cathedral, KK
	Suzy	22	F	St. Simon Church, Likas
	Alicia	24	F	Catholic Campus Ministry, KK
	Benjamin	23	M	Borneo Dayak Council, KK
	Elly	24	F	St. Anthony Church, Tenom
3 **Miri, SARAWAK** (Mixed Gender/ Non-Muslim Only)	Radley	30	M	Self-Employed
	Ayden	28	M	Hotel Management
	Ramsey	28	M	Technician at Oil and Gas
	Rafael	19	M	College Student
	Albert	19	M	College Student
	Zakir	30	M	Oil and Gas Engineer
4 **Kuching, SARAWAK** (Mixed Gender/Mixed Race-Religion)	Timothy	30	M	Self-Employed/Musician
	Raymond	22	M	Psychology Student
	Ella	30	F	Nurse
	Waylyn	34	F	Tuition Teacher
	Lex	27	M	Business Owner
	Nelly	28	F	Gallery Assistant
	Denise	29	F	Self Employed
5 **Johor Baharu, JOHOR** (Mixed Gender/Mixed Race-Religion)	Mazlan	32	M	Graphic Designer
	Faizal	35	M	Business Consultant
	Saiful	27	M	Fresh Graduate
	Iman	25	M	Self-Employed
	Jamiliah	24	F	Musician

Group	Name	Age	Gender	Description
	Kelvin	23	M	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)
6 **Kota Bharu, KELANTAN** (Mixed Gender/Muslim Only)	Farah	26	F	Chambering/Law Graduate
	Azlan	35	M	Factory Technician
	Hisham	18	M	High School Leaver
	Zakaria	34	M	Self-Employed – Bread Maker
	Ali	30	M	Technician
	Marzuki	28	M	Online Business Owner/PSM Activist
	Hanif	27	M	Business Owner
7 **Kuala Lumpur, KUALA LUMPUR** (Mixed Gender/Mixed Race-Religion)	Alia	23	F	Malaysia Muda (MM)
	Thomas	22	M	University of Tun Abdul Razak (UNITAR)
	Faizal	29	M	Jemaat Ahmadiya Muslim Malaysia
	Ida	33	F	Former Employee of Tourism Ministry
	Rohaya	25	F	Program Executive ILDS
	Adam	28	M	Axiata Talent Development
8 **Kangar, PERLIS** (Mixed Gender/Muslim Only)	Syaiful	30	M	Writer/Member of PKR (Political Party)
	Aziz	28	M	Consultant on Investments
	Melissa	22	F	University Student – Islamic Faculty
	Nurul	22	F	University Student
	Tasya	21	F	Primary School Teacher
	Shafiq	33	M	Musician/Graphic Designer
	Hafiz	32	M	University Technician
	Iqram	34	M	Government Civil Servant

Appendix B: Recruitment Screener

The goal of the focus groups is twofold: To understand how participants perceive racial and religious diversity, and to understand what sources of information participants use to learn about racial and religious tolerance.
Focus group composition and location:

Group #	Location	Demographics
1	Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur)	Mixed
2	Sabah (Kota Kinabalu)	Mixed (non-Muslims only)
3	Sabah (Tawau)	Mixed
4	Sarawak (Kuching)	Mixed
5	Sarawak (Miri)	Mixed (non-Muslims only)
6	Kota Baharu in Kelantan	Muslims only
7	Johor Baharu in Johor	Mixed

8	Kangar in Perlis	Mixed (Muslims only)

Each focus group must have a minimum of 6 participants, but it is advisable that you recruit several back-ups for each session.

To the extent possible, participants in the same focus group session may not know one another. Therefore, when snowball recruiting, avoid putting direct referrals into the same group as the referring person.

To introduce this project to a potential candidate, please feel free to use your own words, but make sure you cover the following points:

- Hi, my name is (_____) and I am from IMAN Research

- We are recruiting for a voluntary social science study

- Participants will get together and discuss issues on race and religion in Malaysia for about 90-120 minutes

- The discussion will be recorded and later on, IMAN will write a report summarizing everyone's opinion

- Your name will NOT be used in the report—as per research ethics IMAN will guarantee the confidentiality of your identity

- IMAN will provide a stipend as a thank you for participating in the study.

Screener Questions for Potential Focus Group Discussion Participants

We are looking for people who have a specific profile. To find out if you qualify, I need to ask you a few questions. May I begin?

1.) Language of recruitment screening:

English	*Ensure that recruited participants are fluent in the language of the focus group discussions.*
Bahasa Malaysia	

2.) Location:

Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur)		*Keep for FGD 1*
Sabah (Kota Kinabalu)		*Keep for FGD 2*
Sabah (Tawau)		*Keep for FGD 3*
Sarawak (Kuching)		*Keep for FGD 4*
Sarawak (Miri)		*Keep for FGD 5*
Kota Baharu in Kelantan		*Keep for FGD 6*
Johor Baharu in Johor		*Keep for FGD 7*
Perlis		*Keep for FGD 8*

3.) Have you participated in a focus group study in the past 12 months?

Yes	*Terminate*
No	*Keep for all*

4.) Gender (DO NOT ASK, CODE BY OBSERVATION)

Female	
Male	

5.) How old are you? WRITE DOWN EXACT AGE: _____

Under 18	*Terminate*
18 and over	*Keep for all*

6.) What is your occupation? WRITE DOWN: _____

7.) Please select the statement that best describes your current economic situation

I have trouble feeding myself and my family and buying even the most essential things for survival	
I have enough means for survival, but I do not have enough money for extra things	
I can afford things like new clothes and eating at restaurants but not often	
I can afford things like new clothes and eating out and also support other members of my family who are not able to do these things	

8.) What is the highest level of education you have attained?

No formal education	
Some primary	
Completed Primary	
Completed Secondary	
College/University	

9.) What is your religion?

Islam	
Buddhism	
Christianity	
Hinduism	
None	
Other, specify_____	

10.) What is your race?

Chinese	
Indian	
Malay	

| Other bumiputras, specify _____ |
| Other, specify _____ |

Conclusion: Thank you very much for answering my questions. I would now like to collect your name and contact information. If you are a match for IMAN's research project, we will get in touch with you. In case you qualify, we anticipate that the discussion will be held on [DATE/TIME]. Would you be available then?

NAME	PHONE NUMBER/EMAIL

Tujuan perbincangan kumpulan fokus diadakan adalah: i) Untuk memahami tanggapan peserta yang terlibat tentang kepelbagaian kaum dan agama di Malaysia, ii) Untuk mengenal pasti sumber-sumber maklumat yang digunakan oleh peserta dalam memahami maksud toleransi kaum dan agama.

Lokasi dan komposisi kumpulan fokus:

Kumpulan #	Lokasi	Demografik/Komposisi
1	Kuala Lumpur	Bercampur
2	Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	Bercampur jantina, bukan Muslim
3	Tawau, Sabah	Bercampur
4	Kuching, Sarawak	Bercampur
5	Miri, Sarawak	Bercampur jantina, bukan Muslim
6	Kota Baharu, Kelantan	Bercampur jantina, Muslim
7	Johor Baharu, Johor	Bercampur
8	Perlis, Kangar	Bercampur jantina, Muslim

Setiap perbincangan kumpulan fokus mestilah disertai sekurang-kurangnya enam (6) orang peserta, namun anda disarankan untuk merekrut beberapa peserta lain sebagai cadangan.

Sekiranya boleh, para peserta yang menyertai sesi perbincangan kumpulan fokus yang sama hendaklah tidak mengenali antara satu sama lain. Oleh itu, sewaktu mencari peserta diskusi, elakkan daripada memilih dua orang peserta yang mengenali satu sama lain secara dirancang.

Anda boleh menggunakan ayat anda sendiri untuk memperkenalkan projek ini kepada peserta yang berpotensi, dan nyatakan juga maklumat-maklumat berikut:

- Salam sejahtera, nama saya (_____), saya daripada IMAN Research.

- Kami sedang mencari penyertaan secara sukarela untuk satu kajian sains sosial.

- Para peserta akan berkumpul dan membincangkan topik semasa tentang kaum dan agama di Malaysia selama 90-120 minit.

- Diskusi yang dijalankan akan dirakamkan. IMAN akan menyediakan sebuah laporan hasil daripada setiap satu sesi diskusi.

- Nama peserta TIDAK akan digunakan di dalam laporan ini - IMAN akan menjamin kerahsiaan maklumat peribadi anda sebagai etika kajian.

- IMAN akan membayar peserta yang menyertai sesi perbincangan kumpulan fokus sebagai tanda terima kasih atas penyertaan.

Soalan Tapisan Rekrutmen Peserta bagi Perbincangan Kumpulan Fokus

Kami sedang mencari peserta yang mempunyai profil berikut. Untuk mengetahui sekiranya anda layak, saya perlu bertanya beberapa soalan. Boleh saya mulakan?

Bahasa yang digunakan untuk merekrut peserta:

English	*Pastikan peserta yang direkrut lancar*
Bahasa	*menggunakan bahasa yang digunakan di dalam*
Malaysia	*diskusi kelompok fokus.*

1.) Lokasi:

Kuala Lumpur		*FGD 1*
Sabah, Kota Kinabalu		*FGD 2*
Sabah, Tawau		*FGD 3*
Sarawak, Kuching		*FGD 4*
Sarawak, Miri		*FGD 5*
Kota Baharu, Kelantan		*FGD 6*
Johor Baharu, Johor		*FGD 7*
Kangar, Perlis		*FGD 8*

2.) Adakah anda mengambil bahagian dalam kajian perbincangan kumpulan fokus dalam tempoh 12 bulan yang lalu?

YA	*Ditolak*
TIDAK	*Diterima*

3.) Jantina (TIDAK PERLU DITANYA, BERDASARKAN PEMERHATIAN)

Lelaki	
Perempuan	

4.) Berapakah umur anda? SILA TULIS UMUR YANG TEPAT : _____

Bawah 18 tahun	*Ditolak*
18 tahun ke-atas	*Diterima*

5.) Apakah pekerjaan anda? SILA TULIS: _____

6.) Sila pilih kenyataan yang paling menggambarkan situasi ekonomi anda sekarang?

Saya menghadapi kesukaran untuk menampung diri dan keluarga saya, dan juga tidak mempunyai pendapatan yang cukup untuk membeli barang keperluan asas.	
Saya mempunyai pendapatan yang cukup, hanya untuk membeli barang keperluan asas tetapi tidak untuk keperluan lain.	
Saya mampu membeli pakaian baru dan makan di restoran tetapi tidak selalu.	
Saya mampu membeli pakaian baru dan makan di luar serta mampu menampung ahli keluarga saya yang tidak berkemampuan.	

7.) Apakah tahap pendidikan tertinggi yang telah anda capai?

Tiada pendidikan formal	
Sekolah Rendah	
Sekolah Menengah	
Tamat Sekolah Menengah	
Kolej/Universiti	

8.) Apakah agama anda?

Islam	
Buddha	
Kristian	
Hindu	
Tiada	
Lain-lain, sila nyatakan _____	

9.) Apakah bangsa anda?

Cina	
India	
Melayu	
Bumiputra lain, sila nyatakan _____	
Lain-lain, sila nyatakan _____	

Rumusan: Terima kasih atas jawapan yang anda berikan. Saya juga ingin mendapatkan nama dan nombor telefon anda. Jika anda dipilih untuk menyertai kajian ini, pihak IMAN akan menghubungi anda. Sekiranya anda layak, kami bercadang untuk mengadakan perbincangan kumpulan fokus ini pada [TARIKH/MASA] tersebut. Adakah anda mempunyai masa terluang ketika itu?

NAMA	NOMBOR TELEFON/E-MEL

Notes for Moderator:

The moderator should emphasize that it is important that the participants speak freely and openly. This discussion guide is <u>not a script</u>; rather, the main purpose of this guide is to familiarize the moderator with the questions and issues that we would like to see addressed during the focus groups and to recommend a general order and flow of the topics to be discussed.

The focus groups themselves should be as free and spontaneous as possible. So long as the moderator investigates the issues in this guide, he/she is free to combine questions, change questions, omit questions that do not seem to be working and add questions in response to interesting trends as they become apparent. The moderator may also prompt the participants if they need help getting started. However, the moderator should let the participants respond spontaneously initially.

The moderator should aim to get specific and detailed answers through probing and follow-up questions, and by encouraging a true exchange of views among the participants. It is important that the moderator conduct a group discussion, not a group interview.

Please keep the following study objectives in mind throughout the discussions:

- Understand how participants perceive racial and religious diversity and its causes and impacts. How do participants describe the nature, causes, and effects of racial and religious intolerance, politicization of race and religion, and religious extremism and violent extremism on their lives and the country? How serious do they feel these issues are, and why? What do they think can be done to address the problems, by whom/what groups/institutions? How do they assess the efforts made to do so?

- Understand what sources participants use to learn about and stay abreast of the issues of racial and religious tolerance, and what media outlets' role can be in addressing these issues. What are their main sources (media outlets on any platform, other people or institutions) of information about the events and issues involved? Ultimately, what are the most important things media can do to help inform people's views, discussions and actions on these issues? In particular, which if any online sites (web, social media) have they found valuable to their understanding and discussion of these issues?

I.   Introduction (5 minutes)

Introduction of moderator and participants (ask them to use first or nick name only to protect their privacy)

- Explanation of purpose of group: We invited you here today to discuss issues related to religion and minorities. In the second half of our discussion, we will be listening to a few messages and I would like to get your feedback on these messages.

- Explanation of use of contributions: A report will be written based on what this group and many other discussion groups we are holding for this study will say. We may use what you say in the report, but nothing you say will be associated with your personal identity, hence please speak freely and openly.

- Explanation of the "rules" of the discussion:

  ➢ Be critically-minded – constructive criticism and negative assessments are as important as positive comments and praise.
  ➢ Try not to talk all at once.
  ➢ Be as specific as possible with concrete examples whenever possible.
  ➢ Mobile phones: Turn off or switch to silent.

II.   Warm-up and Interactions with "others" (approx. 15 minutes)

Aim: Gain better understanding of participants' background and first-hand experience with racial and religious issues.

- *Warm-up question*: What is the most important issue facing our country these days?

- Do you ever interact with people who have a different religion or are from a different race? Can you tell me about such interactions? [*First allow for open discussion, if necessary, probe with*:]

   o   In what context do you interact with such people?
   o   Are these interactions generally positive or negative, or does it vary by person? What makes such interactions positive or negative?
   o   Would you prefer more or fewer interactions with such people? Why?

III.   Understanding of race (approx. 10 minutes)

Aim: Gain better understanding of participants' feelings regarding and knowledge of different races.

- What do you think the term "race" means?
- Is race an important concept in Malaysia? Why or why not?
- What do you know about the following races: [ethnic group commonly found in that area] and [two ethnic groups not commonly found in that area]?

IV.   Understanding of religion (approx. 10 minutes)

Aim: Gain better understanding of participants' feelings regarding and knowledge of different religions

- What do you think the term "religion" means?

- Is religion an important concept in Malaysia? Why or why not?
- What do you know about the following religions or belief systems (PLEASE LIMIT TO 3)?
  - Islam
  - Hinduism
  - Christianity
  - Buddhism
  - Yahudi
  - Taoism
  - Bahai
  - Sikh
  - Animism
  - Atheism

V.   Understanding of Tolerance (approx. 30 minutes)

Aim: Understand nature, causes, and effects of religious and minority intolerance issues on their lives and the country

- When you hear the word "tolerance", what comes to your mind?
- Do you think tolerance is a desirable concept? Why or why not?
- Do we have racial and religious tolerance here in our country or not? Why or why not? Can you name some examples that show that we have it or not?
- How important is it to you that we have racial and religious tolerance in our country? In other words, is a lack of tolerance a serious problem or not? Why?
- Does tolerance include we should treat people of different religions in our country the same as we treat people from our own religion? Why or why not?
- Does tolerance include we should treat people of different races in our country the same as we treat people from our own group? Why or why not?
- Have you ever come across any instances of religious or racial intolerance? Please tell me about it.
  - How close were you to it?
    - Were you directly involved, observing it, heard about it from others, heard about it in the media?
  - How did you feel when you came across this case?
  - How frequently do you come across such cases?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: In Malaysia, religion and race are always politicized? Why or why not?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Religion is linked to violent extremism? Why or why not?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Religion has helped with the development of Malaysia? Why or why not?

VI.   Media (approx. 20 minutes)

Aim: To understand the role of media in tolerance issues

- I would like to know what sources you use to find out about things related to race and religion. Are there are specific media outlets or programs you use, or people who you listen to? Which ones?
  - Do you trust what is said by these sources about race and religion issues? Why or why not?
  - *[Probe if not organically raised by participants]*: What about websites, apps and social media in particular? Are there any that you use to get information on race and religion issues? Which ones? Why these?
  - Are there any traditional or social media sources that you know to promote intolerance on race and religion issues? If yes, can you give me an example?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: In Malaysia, the media plays a role in fostering tolerance between multiracial communities? Why or why not?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Mass media and social media in Malaysia are biased? Why or why not?
- What could media sources do to help foster tolerance on race and religion?

VII.   Tolerance efforts (approx. 15 minutes)

Aim: Explore participants' thoughts on efforts to increase racial and religious tolerance.

- What is your take on the "National Principles"? Please explain.
  - Do you think they play an important role in fostering tolerance? Why or why not? How?
- Who is responsible for fostering tolerance between various racial and religious groups in Malaysia? Why?
  - Do you think they are doing a good job or bad job? Why?
- What do you think can be done to address religious and racial intolerance? [*First allow participants to freely name ideas, then probe for:]*
  - Are there any people or groups or institutions who would be well-suited to address religious and racial intolerance? What makes them well-suited?
- Are you aware of any efforts in our country to address intolerance? What kinds?
  - And who (people, groups etc.) is making such efforts?
  - Do you think they are successful? Why or why not?

VIII.   Wrap-up (approx. 5 minutes)

Aim: To elicit open feedback to potentially raise points of importance for participants that were not addressed earlier in the discussion.

- Today's discussion was meant to discuss issues related to religion and race. I have given you many different aspects to discuss. But there may be other aspects that I did not think about that may also play a role. Is there anything else I should know if I want to truly understand this subject?

<u>Nota untuk Moderator:</u>

Moderator perlu menekankan pentingnya setiap peserta bercakap secara bebas dan terbuka. Panduan perbincangan ini bukanlah satu skrip yang tetap; sebaliknya bertujuan untuk membiasakan moderator dengan pertanyaan dan isu-isu yang ingin dihuraikan semasa perbincangan berlangsung dan untuk mengesyorkan susunan umum dan aliran topik yang mahu dibincangkan.

Setiap perbincangan kumpulan fokus haruslah dijalankan secara bebas dan spontan, Selagi moderator dapat mengupas isu-isu seperti di dalam panduan ini, moderator bebas menggabung, menukar atau meninggalkan soalan yang kurang relevan atau menambah soalan lain sebagai tindakbalas, bagi merancakkan perbincangan. Moderator juga boleh menggalakkan penyertaan peserta yang memerlukan bantuan untuk terlibat dalam perbincangan. Walaubagaimanapun, moderator harus membiarkan peserta untuk memberikan pandangan secara spontan.

Moderator mestilah cuba mendapatkan jawapan tersirat dan terperinci menerusi soalan-soalan menyelidik dan soalan-soalan susulan, serta menggalakkan pertukaran pendapat dalam kalangan para peserta. Adalah penting untuk moderator melakukan perbincangan kumpulan, bukan wawancara kumpulan.

Semua perbincangan hendaklah mematuhi objektif kajian yang berikut::

- Memahami persepsi peserta tentang kepelbagaian kaum dan keagamaan serta penyebab dan kesannya.Bagaimanakah peserta menggambarkan sifat, sebab, dan kesan sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap kepelbagaian kaum dan agama, politik perkauman dan keagamaan, ekstremisme agama dan keganasan ekstrem terhadap kehidupan mereka dan negara? Adakah mereka merasakan bahawa isu-isu ini penting dan mengapakah mereka berasa sedemikian? Pada pendapat peserta, apakah penyelesaian atau tindakan yang boleh diambil untuk menangani masalah ini, dan oleh siapa/kumpulan/institusi mana? Bagaimanakah mereka menilai usaha yang dilakukan?

- Memahami sumber-sumber maklumat yang digunakan oleh peserta untuk mengikuti perbincangan semasa isu-isu toleransi kaum dan keagamaan serta apakah peranan media dalam mengenengahkan isu-isu tersebut? Apakah sumber maklumat utama para peserta (media, institusi atau individu) mengenai isu-isu yang dibentangkan? Apakah perkara yang paling penting yang boleh dilakukan oleh pihak media untuk membantu pembentukan persepsi, perbincangan dan tindakan orang ramai tentang isu-isu ini? Khususnya, adakah mereka mendapati mana-mana laman dalam talian (laman web, media sosial) yang membantu memahami dan membincangkan isu-isu ini?

I. <u>Pengenalan (5 Minit)</u>

Moderator dan peserta memperkenalkan diri masing-masing. (Para peserta diminta menggunakan nama pertama atau nama samaran bagi melindungi identiti sebenar mereka.)

- Jelaskan tujuan perbincangan kumpulan fokus ini diadakan: Kami menjemput anda pada hari ini untuk membincangkan isu-isu terkini berkaitan dengan kepelbagaian kaum dan agama.

Pada sesi kedua perbincangan ini nanti, kami akan mendengar beberapa potongan ayat dan saya ingin mendapatkan maklumbalas anda mengenai mesej ini.

● Jelaskan tentangimbuhan yang akan disediakan/dibayar pada akhir sesi perbincangan. Maklumkan bahawa perbincangan ini akan dirakamkan dan sebuah laporan akan ditulis berdasarkan perbincangan kumpulan ini serta perbincangan dari kumpulan-kumpulan lain yang terlibat dalam kajian ini. Sebarang kenyataan yang dilontarkan di dalam perbincangan akan dimasukkan kedalam laporan, tetapi IMAN tidak akan mengaitkan sebarang pandangan itu dengan mana - mana peserta perbincangan, oleh itu, para peserta boleh bercakap secara bebas dan terbuka.

● Penjelasan mengenai "syarat-syarat" perbincangan:

➢ Berfikir secara kritikal - kritikan yang konstruktif dan penilaian negatif adalah sama pentingnya dengan pandangan dan pujian positif.
➢ Jangan bercakap secara sekaligus.
➢ Berikan jawapan yang lebih terperinci dan spesifik dengan memberi contoh yang konkrit apabila menjawab.
➢ Telefon bimbit: Sila matikan telefon atau tukarkan ke mod 'silent'.

II. Fasa persediaan dan interaksi dengan "peserta lain" (kira-kira 15 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami dengan lebih baik mengenai latar belakang para peserta dan pengalaman secara langsung tentang isu-isu perkauman dan keagamaan.

Soalan pemulaan: Apakah isu yang paling utama yang dihadapi negara kita pada hari ini?

● Adakah anda pernah berinteraksi dengan individu yang berbeza kepercayaan agama atau dari kaum yang berlainan? Bolehkah anda memberitahu saya tentang interaksi tersebut? *[Mulakan dengan perbincangan terbuka, dan jika perlu, lanjutkan dengan soalan-soalan berikut]*
   o Dalam konteks apakah anda berinteraksi dengan individu-individu tersebut?
   o Adakah interaksi ini secara umumnya positif atau negatif, atau adakah ia bergantung pada individu?
   o Apakah yang menjadikan interaksi tersebut positif atau negatif?
   o Adakah anda ingin berinteraksi dengan lebih atau kurang dengan individu-individu yang berlainan bangsa atau agama? Mengapa?

III. Pemahaman Tentang Kaum (kira-kira 10 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami dengan lebih mendalam tentang perasaan dan pengetahuan para peserta tentang kaum - kaum lain.
● Pada pendapat anda, apakah maksud istilah "bangsa"?
● Adakah kaum merupakan satu konsep penting di Malaysia? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?
● Apakah yang anda tahu mengenai kaum berikut: [Kumpulan etnik apakah yang biasa di kawasan itu] dan [dua kumpulan etnik yang jarang ditemui di kawasan itu]?

IV. Pemahaman Tentang Agama (kira-kira 10 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami dengan lebih mendalam perasaan dan pengetahuan para peserta tentang agama - agama lain.

- Pada pendapat anda, apakah maksud istilah "agama"?
- Adakah agama merupakan satu konsep penting di Malaysia? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?
- Apakah yang anda tahu mengenai agama atau sistem kepercayaan berikut (NYATAKAN HANYA TIGA):
  - o Islam
  - o Hindu
  - o Kristian
  - o Buddha
  - o Yahudi
  - o Taoisme
  - o Bahai
  - o Sikh
  - o Animisme
  - o Ateisme

V.   Pemahaman Tentang Toleransi (kira-kira 30 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami sebab dan kesan sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap agama dan kaum minoriti terhadap kehidupan mereka dan negara.

- Apabila anda mendengar perkataan "toleransi", apakah yang anda fikirkan?

- Adakah anda rasa toleransi adalah konsep yang diingini? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

- Adakah kita mempunyai toleransi kaum dan agama di negara kita atau tidak? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak? Bolehkah anda memberikan contoh yang menunjukkan bahawa kita mempunyai toleransi atau tidak?

- Apakah kepentingannya bagi anda untuk kita mempunyai toleransi kaum dan agama di negara kita? Dengan kata lain, adakah kekurangan sikap toleransi satu masalah yang serius atau tidak? Mengapa?

- Adakah sikap toleransi juga bermaksud kita harus melayani individu yang berbeza agama di negara kita sama seperti kita melayani individu dari agama kita sendiri? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

- Adakah sikap toleransi juga bermaksud kita harus melayani individu yang berbeza kaum di negara kita sama seperti kita melayani individu dari kaum kita sendiri? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

- Pernahkah anda mengalami/terlibat dalam situasi berkaitan dengan sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap kepelbagaian kaum atau agama? Sila ceritakan tentang pengalaman tersebut.

- Apakah jarak anda waktu itu dengan situasi tersebut?

- Adakah anda terlibat secara langsung, memerhatikannya, mendengarnya dari orang lain atau mendengarnya melalui sumber media?

o Bagaimanakah perasaan anda ketika mengetahui tentang situasi itu?

o Berapa kerapkah anda berhadapan dengan situasi seperti itu?

● Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan kenyataan ini: Di Malaysia, isu agama dan kaum sering dipolitikkan. Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

● Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan kenyataan ini: Agama dikaitkan dengan keganasan ekstremisme. Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

● Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan kenyataan ini: Agama telah membantu pembangunan/kewujudan negara Malaysia. Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

VI. Media (kira-kira 20 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami peranan media dalam isu-isu toleransi.

● Saya ingin tahu apakah sumber-sumber maklumat yang anda gunakan untuk mengetahui tentang isu-isu kaum dan agama. Adakah terdapat saluran media atau program khusus yang anda gunakan, atau anda mendengar melalui individu? Yang mana satu?

● Adakah anda mempercayai apa yang dikatakan oleh sumber-sumber ini mengenai isu-isu kaum dan agama? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?
   o *[Selidik jika ia tidak dibangkitkan oleh mana-mana peserta]:* Bagaimana dengan laman internet, aplikasi dan media sosial? Adakah terdapat sebarang maklumat yang anda gunakan untuk mengetahui tentang isu-isu kaum dan agama? Yang mana satu? Mengapa?
   o Adakah terdapat sebarang sumber maklumat dari saluran media biasa atau paparan media sosial yang anda tahu untuk menggalakkan sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap kaum dan agama? Jika YA, bolehkan anda memberikan contoh?

● Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak bersetuju dengan kenyataan ini: Media memainkan peranan dalam memupuk sikap toleransi antara masyarakat berbilang kaum di Malaysia. Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

● Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak bersetuju dengan kenyataan ini: Media massa (arus perdana) dan media sosial di Malaysia adalah berat sebelah. Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

● Apakah yang boleh dilakukan oleh media untuk memupuk sikap toleransi terhadap kaum dan agama?

VII. Usaha-Usaha Toleransi (kira-kira 15 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk memahami corak pemikiran para peserta mengenai usaha-usaha yang dilakukan bagi meningkatkan sikap toleransi kaum dan agama.

● Apakah yang anda fahami dengan maksud "Rukun Negara"? Sila jelaskan.
   o Menurut anda, apakah ia memainkan peranan penting dalam memupuk sikap toleransi? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak? Bagaimana?

o Siapa yang bertanggungjawab memupuk sikap toleransi dalam kalangan masyarakat yang berbilang kaum dan agama di Malaysia? Mengapa?
o Pada pendapat anda, adakah mereka berjaya dalam usaha mereka? Mengapa?

● Menurut anda, apakah yang boleh dilakukan untuk mengatasi sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap kaum dan agama lain? *[Pertama, izinkan peserta untuk melontarkan pandangan, sebelum menyiasat dengan lebih lanjut]*:
o Adakah terdapat mana-mana individu atau kumpulan atau institusi yang sesuai untuk menangani sikap tidak bertoleransi terhadap kaum dan agama? Apakah yang membuatkan mereka ini sesuai?

● Adakah anda peka tentang sebarang usaha untuk menangani sikap tidak bertoleransi di negara kita? Apakah usaha-usaha itu?
o Siapakah mereka (individu, kumpulan dan lain-lain) yang melakukan usaha-usaha sedemikian?
o Menurut anda, adakah mereka berjaya? Mengapa atau tidak?

VIII. Penutup/Rumusan (kira-kira 5 Minit)

Matlamat: Untuk mendapatkan jawapan-jawapan yang tidak dinyatakan sebelum ini di dalam perbincangan.

● Perbincangan hari ini adalah bertujuan untuk membincangkan isu-isu berkaitan kaum dan agama. Saya telah memberi anda banyak aspek dan sudut pandang yang berbeza untuk dibincangkan. Namun, mungkin terdapat aspek-aspek lain yang tidak sempat saya fikirkan, tetapi ada memainkan peranan penting. Adakah terdapat apa-apa lagi yang perlu saya ketahui jika saya ingin memahami tentang isu-isu ini?

Appendix F: Updated Questions (English and Bahasa Melayu)

I. Introductions

II. Warm-up and Interactions with Others (15 minutes)

No	Question	Remarks
1	Have you ever interacted with people of a different race or religion? Describe that interaction. *Pernahkah anda berinteraksi dengan individu yang berlainan agama atau kaum? Ceritakan tentang interaksi tersebut.*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; 2 minutes for each participant

III. <u>Understanding of Race (10 minutes)</u>

No	Question	Remarks
1	What does 'race' mean? *Apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan 'bangsa'?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one
2	Is race an important concept in Malaysia? Yes or no? Why? *Adakah kaum merupakan satu konsep yang penting di Malaysia? Ya atau tidak? Mengapa?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one
3	What do you know about: (ethnic group commonly found in that area) and (two ethnic groups not commonly found in that area)? *Apakah yang anda tahu mengenai kaum: (Kumpulan etnik yang biasa di kawasan tersebut) dan (dua kumpulan etnik yang jarang ditemui di kawasan tersebut)?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; 2 points max from each participant

IV. <u>Understanding of Religion (10 minutes)</u>

No	Question	Remarks
1	What does 'religion' mean? *Apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan 'agama'?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one
2	Is religion an important concept in Malaysia? Yes or no? Why? *Adakah agama merupakan konsep yang penting di Malaysia? Ya atau tidak? Mengapa?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one
3	What do you know about: *Apakah yang anda tahu mengenai agama:* ● Islam ● Hinduism ● Christianity ● Buddhism ● Judaism ● Taoism ● Bahai ● Sikhism	Ask each participant, one-by-one *Encourage them to say 'No' if they don't know

- Animism
- Atheism

V. <u>Understanding of Tolerance (30 minutes)</u>

No	Question	Remarks
1	What does tolerance mean? *Apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan toleransi?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; one sentence answers
2	Is intolerance a serious issue in society? Why? *Adakah kekurangan sikap toleransi dalam masyarakat satu masalah yang serius? Mengapa?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; two-sentence answers
3	Have you ever experienced religious or racial intolerance? Please tell me about it. *Pernahkah anda terlibat dalam situasi kurang toleransi? Sila ceritakan tentang pengalaman tersebut.*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; 1 minute; participant can either be a victim or perpetrator in that situation
4	In Malaysia, religion and race is always politicized. Yes or no? Why? *Di Malaysia, isu agama dan kaum sering dipolitikkan. Setuju atau tidak? Mengapa?*	10 minutes; participants should interact with each other
5	Religion is linked to violent extremism. Yes or no? Why? *Agama dikaitkan dengan keganasan ekstremisme. Setuju atau tidak? Mengapa?*	10 minutes; participants should interact with each other

VI. <u>Media (20 minutes)</u>

No	Question	Remarks
1	What type of media do you use to know racial and religious issues? Are they credible? *Nyatakan jenis media yang anda gunakan untuk mengetahui isu-isu kaum dan agama? Bolehkah mereka dipercayai?*	10 minutes; participants should interact with each other

2	The media plays an important role in fostering tolerance in Malaysia. Yes or no? Why? *Media memainkan peranan yang penting dalam memupuk sikap toleransi di Malaysia. Setuju atau tidak? Mengapa?*	10 minutes; participants should interact with each other

VII. <u>Tolerance Efforts (15 minutes)</u>

No	Question	Remarks
1	Does the Rukun Negara play an important part in fostering tolerance? Yes or no? Why? *Adakah Rukun Negara memainkan peranan penting dalam memupuk sikap toleransi? Ya atau tidak? Bagaimana?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one; 5 minutes, two-sentence answers
2	What efforts are undertaken to address intolerance in Malaysia? *Apakah usaha-usaha yang dijalankan untuk menangani sikap tidak bertoleransi di Malaysia?*	Ask each participant, one-by-one *Encourage them to say 'No' if they don't know

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