Who Owns the Malay Rhetoric?

Underlining the Weak Signals of the GE14 and GE15 Campaigns

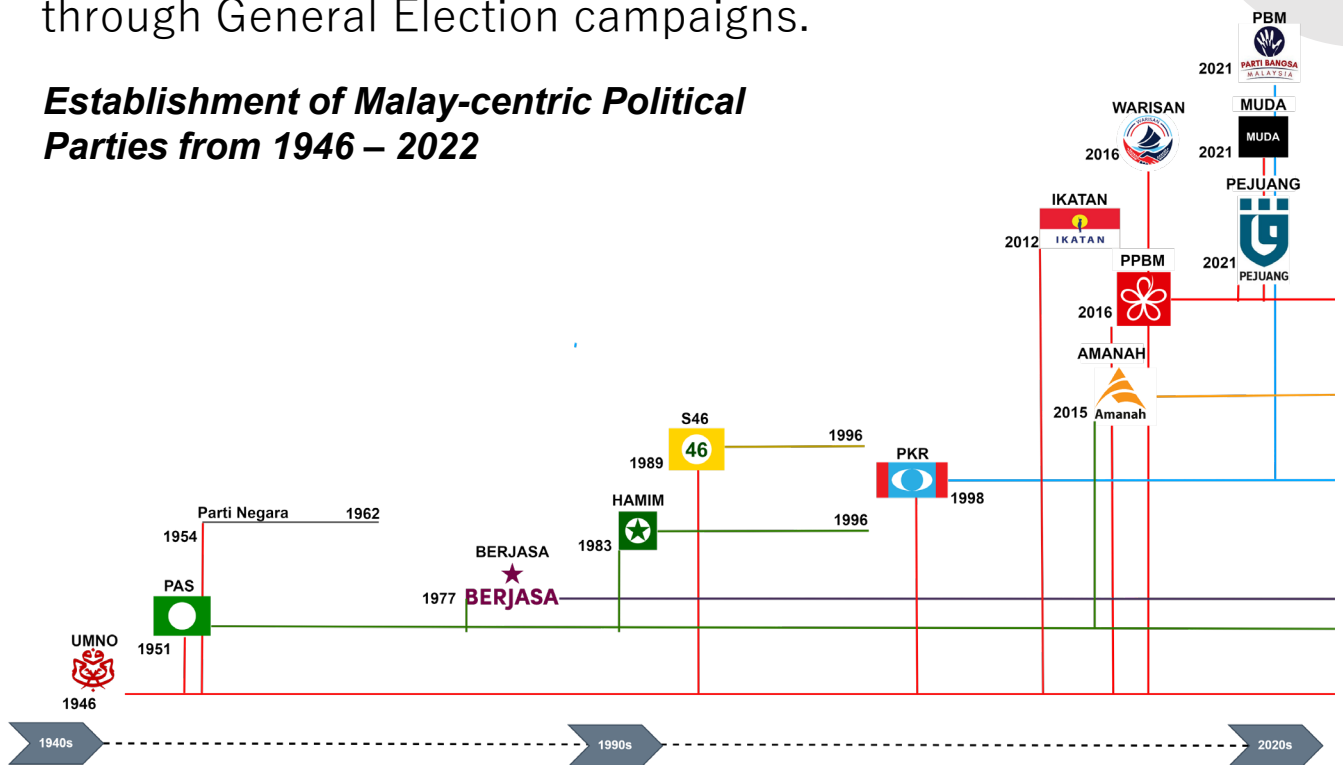Perception Intelligence Analysis

Malaysia Indicator

February 2023

Race and politics have always been known to have a reciprocal relationship ever since it a country was established. Malaysia's diversified ethnicities and beliefs have sped up the establishment of such narrations which is also been catapulted by the politicians through General Election campaigns.
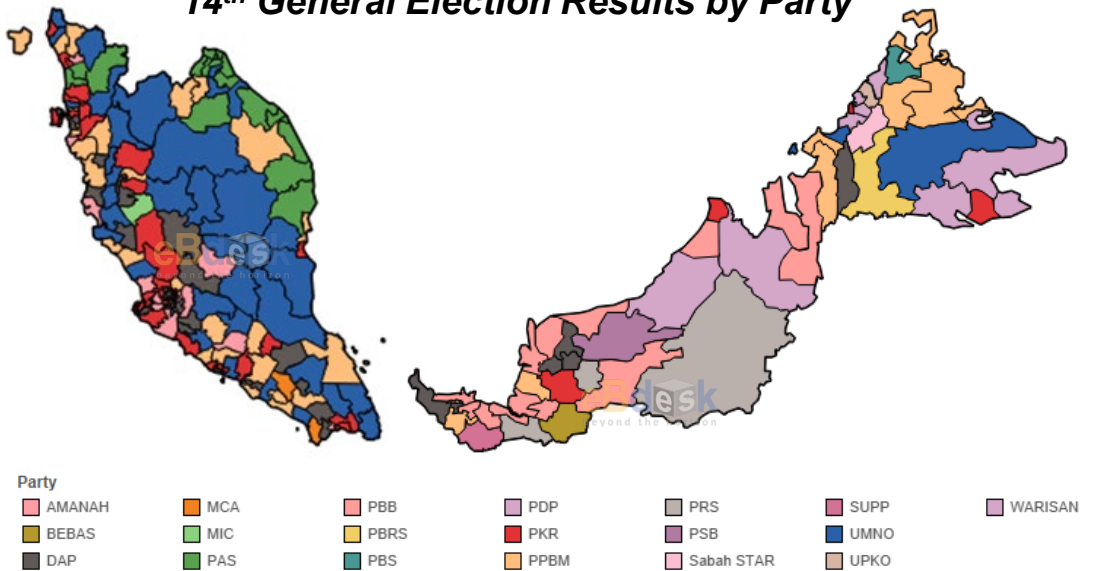
Establishment of Malay-centric Political Parties from 1946 – 2022

PBM
2021
PARTI BANGSA MALAYSIA

WARISAN
2016

MUDA
2021
MUDA

IKATAN
2012
IKATAN

PEJUANG
2021
PEJUANG

PPBM
2016

AMANAH
2015
Amanah

S46
1989
46
1996

PKR
1998

Parti Negara
1954
1962

HAMIM
1983
1996

BERJASA
1977
BERJASA

PAS
1951

UMNO
1946

1940s ····· 1990s ····· 2020s

Prompted ==Catalyst==

As media will amplify the exposure, it has become a need to examine the shift in national narratives exertion from prominent Malay parties' (UMNO-PAS-PPBM) narrations during the campaign period for the 14th and 15th General Elections, to gauge and understand the amplification of the 'rightful defender of the Malays' narrations in the media.
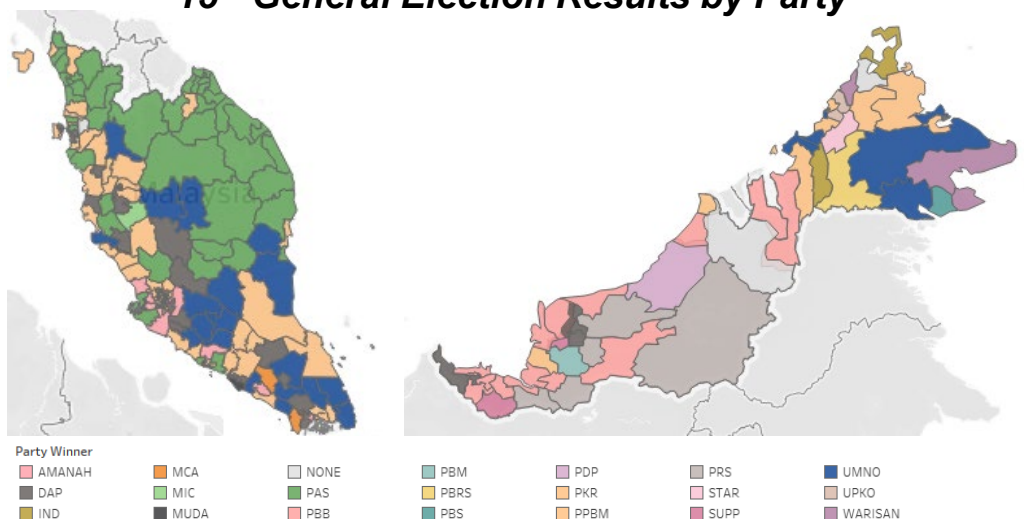
14th General Election Results by Party

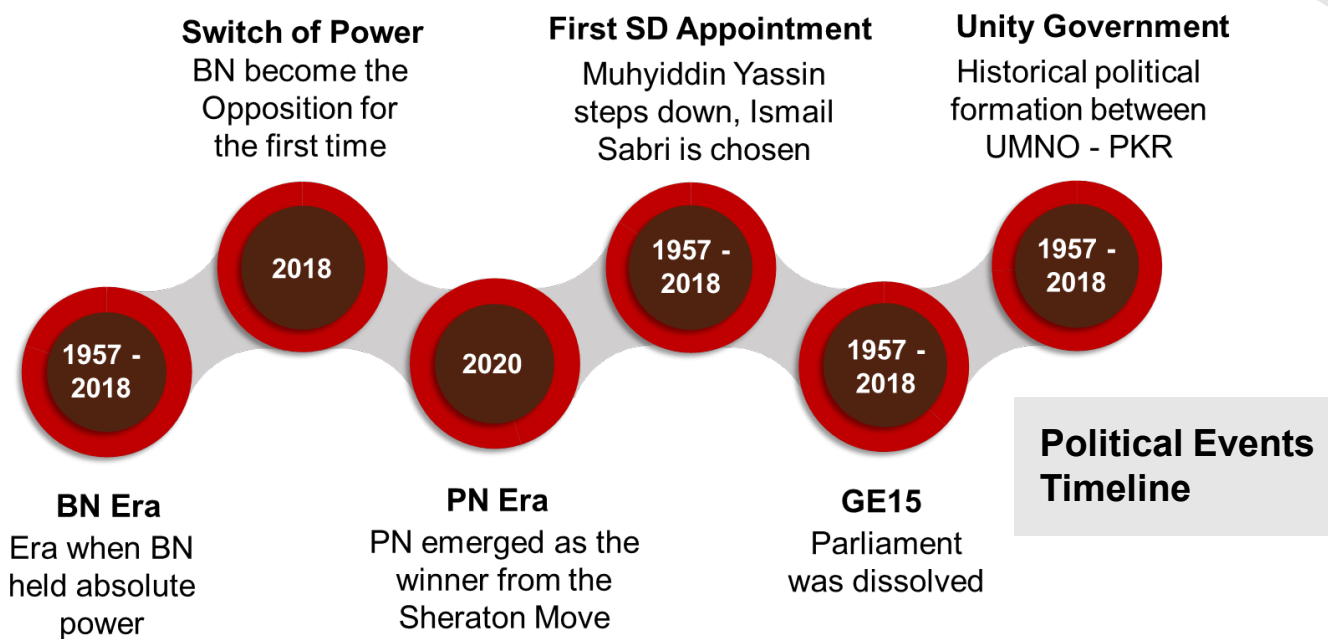|						
AMANAH	MCA	PBB	PDP	PRS	SUPP	WARISAN
BEBAS	MIC	PBRS	PKR	PSB	UMNO	
DAP	PAS	PBS	PPBM	Sabah STAR	UPKO	

Turning Point

While GE14 has been dubbed as the turning point of the Barisan Nasional-led government which is highly controlled by the United Malays National Organization, GE15 has entirely torn out the possibility of a comeback for the coalition as it has lost three-quarters of the contested seats. The fall of the BN government can be determined as a shifting signal in the public's mind, especially the Malays as stronghold seats by UMNO are no longer theirs.

15th General Election Results by Party

AMANAH	MCA	NONE	PBM	PDP	PRS	UMNO
DAP	MIC	PAS	PBRS	PKR	STAR	UPKO
IND	MUDA	PBB	PBS	PPBM	SUPP	WARISAN

Milestone **Shift**

The nation's political scene has been shaped by racial-based narrations ever since its formation led by Barisan Nasional (UMNO–MCA–MIC).

Switch of Power
BN become the Opposition for the first time

First SD Appointment
Muhyiddin Yassin steps down, Ismail Sabri is chosen

Unity Government
Historical political formation between UMNO - PKR

2018

1957 - 2018

1957 - 2018

1957 - 2018

2020

1957 - 2018

Political Events Timeline

BN Era
Era when BN held absolute power

PN Era
PN emerged as the winner from the Sheraton Move
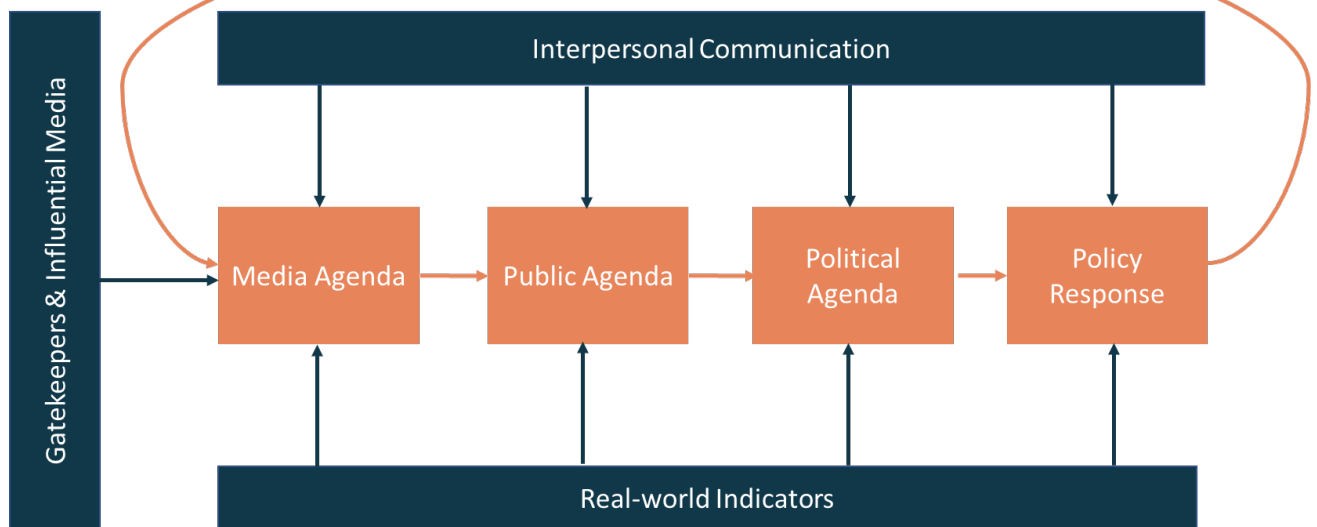
GE15
Parliament was dissolved

While the long-standing domination has stamped and sculptured the field, the 14th General Election that has ended the hegemonic domination of Barisan Nasional is dubbed as a significant shift and turning point in the local political scene.

The erosion of UMNO's dominance is rooted not only in the Reformasi movement of the later 1990s but it is also recorded that the existence of Pakatan Harapan (PH) has been able to initiate intensively the social transformation in racial formation, especially in the urban areas.

Propaganda Agent

Media plays a central role in shaping the beliefs and integration of societies. Due to the influential role of media, another concept that has undergone microscopic research extensively is the political economy of media, which mostly debates media ownership and the role of stakeholders in shaping the direction of the media.

Agenda-Setting Framework

Gatekeepers & Influential Media				
	Interpersonal Communication			
	Media Agenda	Public Agenda	Political Agenda	Policy Response
	Real-world Indicators			

Evidently, due to the strong power the state has over the media, it has also escalated the media ownership by political parties which started in early 1994, following the privatization policy.

Barisan Nasional's Related Media

UTUSAN MALAYSIA · astro · hitz fm · LiteFM · media prima · TheStar · mix fm · TV3

Pakatan Harapan's Local Media Close Affiliation

malaysiakini · the vibes · MD · THE MALAYSIAN INSIGHT

Perikatan Nasional's Media Close Affiliation

Harakahdaily Benar · Inklusif · MALAYSIA NOW

Due to the extensive role of media as disseminating agents for political narrations, it is anticipated that political parties are also involved in media ownership.

While the Barisan Nasional-owned media is an open secret, its rivals, Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional have also threaded along the same pathway, although there is no clear indication about ownership, but only increasing rumors about the affiliation between the media and the party.

Prepping Ammo

==Winning== Narration

As it is expected that the Malay narration will be amplified during the election, in GE14 a clear dissemination between the Malay segmentation has been utilized by the contested parties.

Barisan Nasional's News Excerpts During GE14 Campaign Period

Di Bawah Bn Kampung Baru Akan Tetap Milik Orang Melayu - Johari Abdul Ghani
Utusan
2018-05-06 13:10:50

after thousands of malay voters moved to tebing tinggi, umno confident of victory
The Malay Mail Online
2018-05-01 15:12:14

tanpa umno orang melayu tiada apa-apa - veteran
Bernama
2018-05-04 15:47:28

Pakatan Harapan's News Excerpts During GE14 Campaign Period

Harapan Ulangi Pendirian Untuk Pertahan Hak Melayu Dan Islam Di Malaysia
Pahang Daily Online News
2018-05-06 10:17:06

malay interests will be protected by ph, assures khalid samad
Freemalaysiatoday
2018-05-06 19:03:38

Rafizi To Shahrir: It’s Umno That Has Destroyed Malay Institutions
Freemalaysiatoday
2018-05-02 20:04:32

UMNO has been focusing its narration highly on the rural Malays aside from emphasizing that it is UMNO that has been the sole defender of the Malays ever since it was founded which in retrospect has become the downfall of the party.

Leveraging on UMNO's disadvantage, PH has highlighted the flaws of UMNO in executing its role as the defender and instead proving that only UMNO is the benefactor of the whole 'scheme' through 1MDB's narration.

Spiralling Effects

Twitter Trending of UMNO Topic on GE15 Campaign

In GE15, the constant intra-bickering for UMNO has further solidified the position of PPBM and PAS as UMNO experienced a greater loss of only winning 30 seats from 191 seats contested under BN's flag. The shift in support by the Malays/Muslims to PAS is partly due to the elaborative usage of the national narrative that has attracted the new generation of Malay as UMNO has always been associated with elitist and protecting the rich Malay needs.

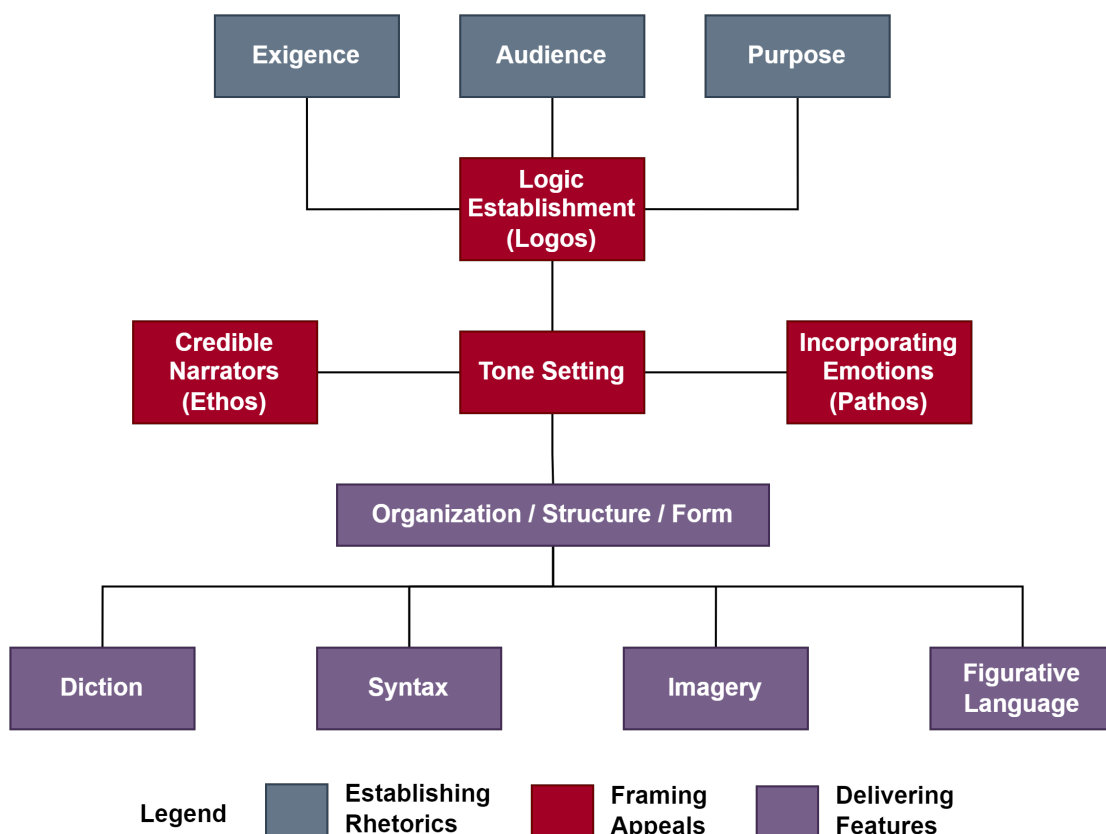# Deciphering Portrayal

Horizon Scanning Framework
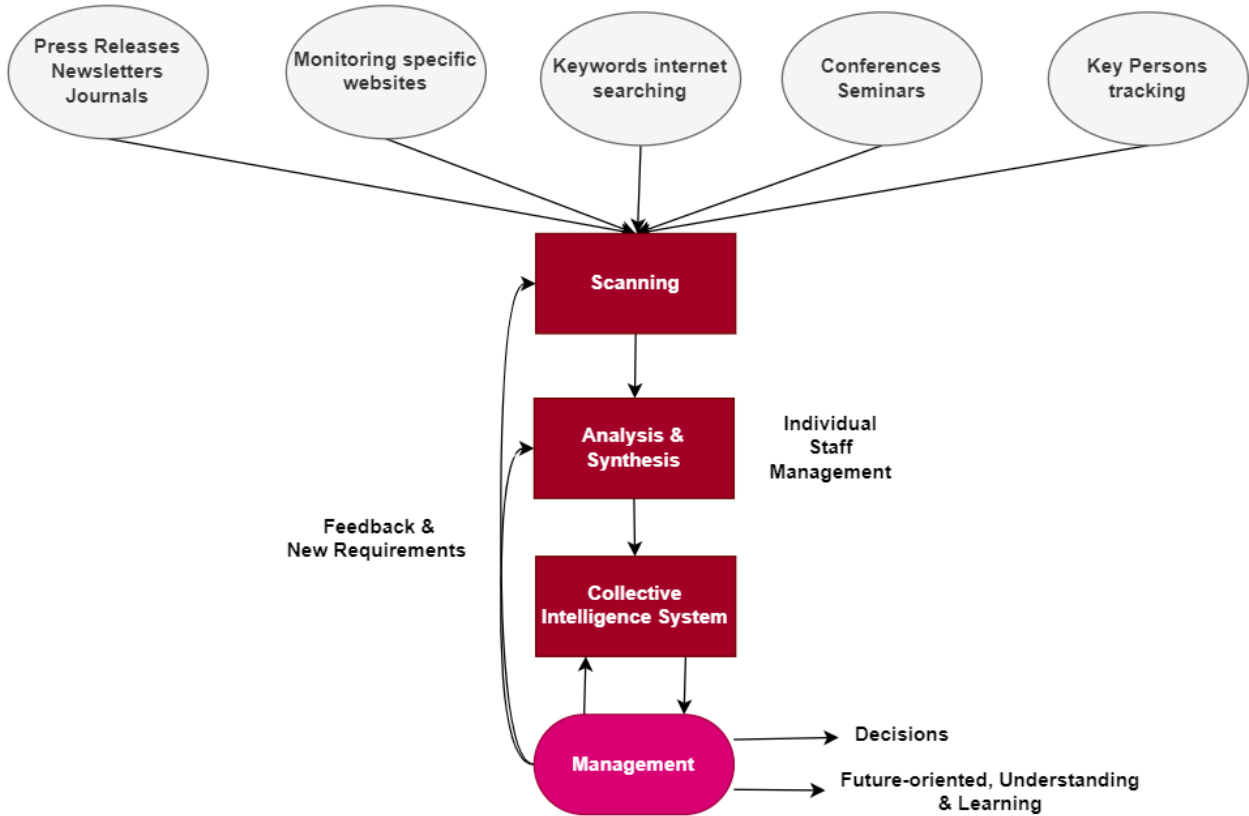
The horizon scanning approach can be used in dissecting the weak signals formed by analyzing the influencers and statements related to the formation of the national narrative which requires a high level of abstraction.

Hence, by combining the method of horizon scanning approach, alongside rhetorical analysis to comprehend the connotation of a specific narration.

Patterns Identification

Joliffe's Rhetorical Analysis Framework

Exigence	Audience	Purpose

Logic Establishment (Logos)

Credible Narrators (Ethos)	Tone Setting	Incorporating Emotions (Pathos)

Organization / Structure / Form

Diction	Syntax	Imagery	Figurative Language

Legend
- Establishing Rhetorics
- Framing Appeals
- Delivering Features

The rhetorical analysis will provide restrictions in order to decipher the narrations as implicit patterns, assumptions, and omissions of a text resulting in it being understood in a broader, post-cultural sense that can be read.

To form certainty in the abstractness, the scanning process will undergo exploratory and issue-centered scanning in analyzing the narrations contributed by the top leaders from the Malay-centric parties (PPBM-UMNO-PAS) during GE14 and GE15 campaign period in comparison.

Establishing Parameters

National Narrative Keywords

"Melayu"

"Muslim"

"Islam"

"Bangsa Melayu"

"Bangsa Kita"

"Malay"

"Malay Supremacy"

"Ketuanan Melayu"

As the political parties have been using race-based narrations as the national narrative, the statements made by the prominent leaders of the strongest Malay-centric parties, UMNO-PPBM-PAS, will be filtered directly and in accordance with the selected keywords associated with the Malays from the politicians' statements which then proceed to be analyzed.
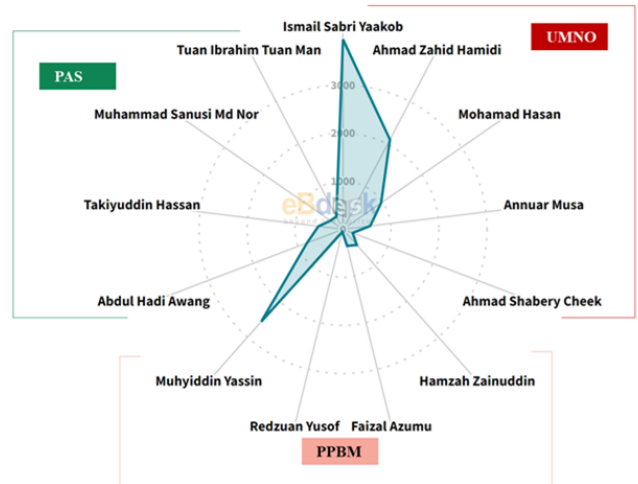
Consistent Frame

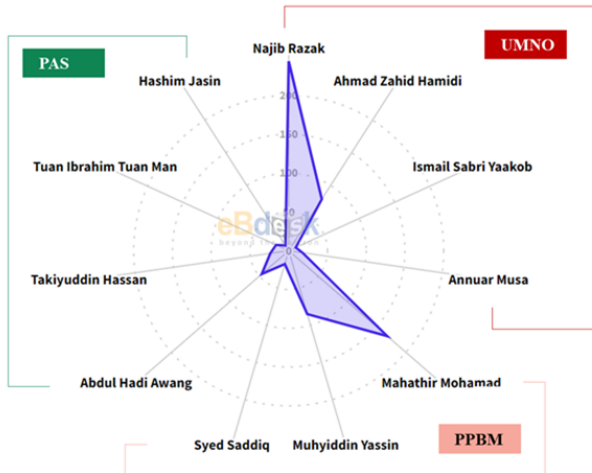## *Number of Statements by Politicians*

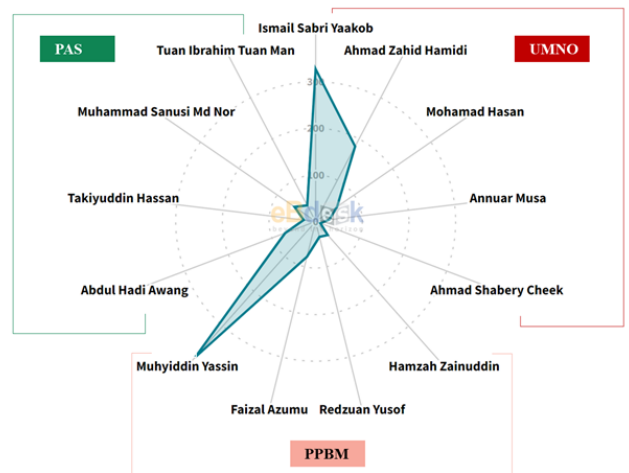14th General Election: Statement Counts
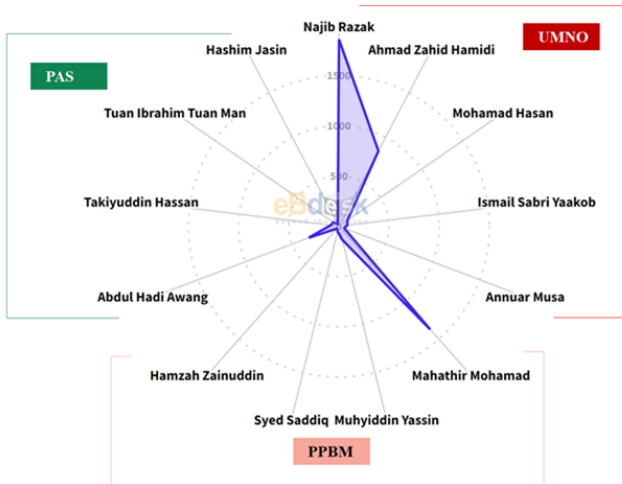
15th General Election: Statement Counts

14th General Election: National Narratives

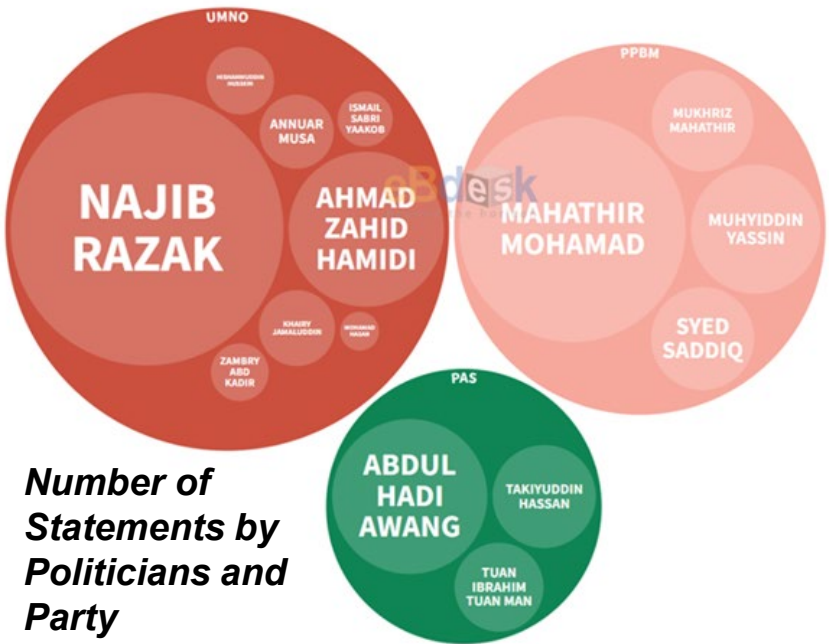15th General Election: National Narratives

The result of the analysis has shown that the leaders of each party have a clear domination in terms of the number of statements recorded during the electoral campaign for both general elections despite GE14 being dubbed as the stage for Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and Najib Abdul Razak.

As for national narratives, it is depicted that the party leaders were still leading the party's narrations.
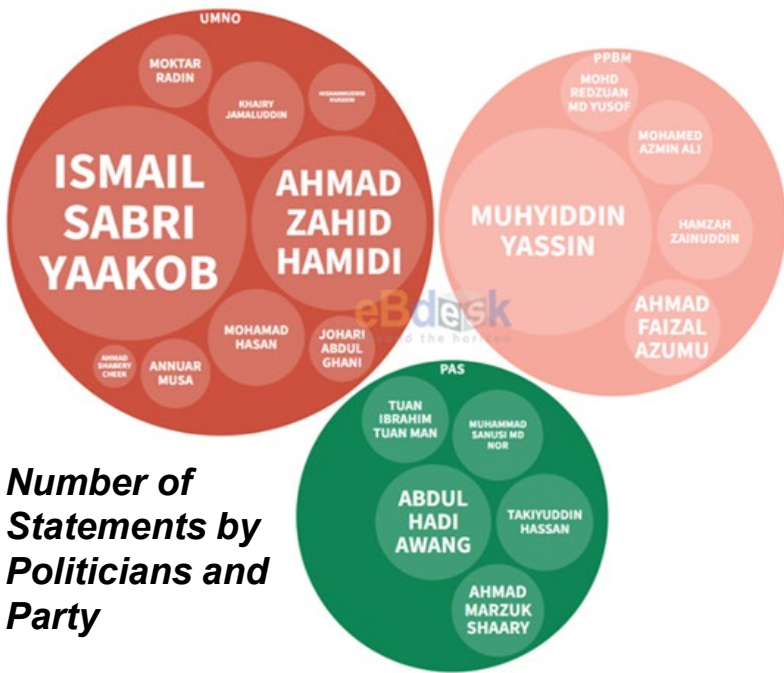
Overflowed Envoy

14th General Election: National Narratives

UMNO
- NAJIB RAZAK
- AHMAD ZAHID HAMIDI
- HISHAMMUDDIN HUSSEIN
- ANNUAR MUSA
- ISMAIL SABRI YAAKOB
- KHAIRY JAMALUDDIN
- MOHAMAD HASAN
- ZAMBRY ABD KADIR

PPBM
- MAHATHIR MOHAMAD
- MUKHRIZ MAHATHIR
- MUHYIDDIN YASSIN
- SYED SADDIQ

PAS
- ABDUL HADI AWANG
- TAKIYUDDIN HASSAN
- TUAN IBRAHIM TUAN MAN

Number of Statements by Politicians and Party

UMNO's strong forte has always been in conquering the top spokesperson for the Election topic as depicted in the data for both timelines.

However, for PPBM and PAS, the strong backing from its members has allowed for consistency in narrations formed during both timelines, thus amplifying the party's branding with a single direction.

15th General Election: National Narratives

UMNO
- ISMAIL SABRI YAAKOB
- AHMAD ZAHID HAMIDI
- MOKTAR RADIN
- KHAIRY JAMALUDDIN
- HISHAMMUDDIN HUSSEIN
- MOHAMAD HASAN
- JOHARI ABDUL GHANI
- AHMAD SHABERY CHEEK
- ANNUAR MUSA

PPBM
- MOHD REDZUAN MD YUSOF
- MOHAMED AZMIN ALI
- MUHYIDDIN YASSIN
- HAMZAH ZAINUDDIN
- AHMAD FAIZAL AZUMU

PAS
- TUAN IBRAHIM TUAN MAN
- MUHAMMAD SANUSI MD NOR
- ABDUL HADI AWANG
- TAKIYUDDIN HASSAN
- AHMAD MARZUK SHAARY

Number of Statements by Politicians and Party

By using the filtered keywords related to the national narratives, it is found that the top keywords for UMNO and PPBM are highly similar, targeting the Malay community generally.

Top Keywords from Statements for UMNO Leaders

Top Keywords from Statements for PPBM Leaders

In GE15, PBBM's keywords cluster has shown that Muhyiddin Yassin managed to break free from Mahathir's image as the party now is currently directing its target upon Anwar Ibrahim, although the keyword 'rasuah' still remains consistent in both timelines.

Riding the ==Same Wave==

Decade-Long Enemy

While PAS also focuses on its national narratives, most of the words that appeared in the word cloud clusters for both general elections show its consistency in using narration against DAP – 'kafir' and 'komunis' – which remains the same throughout both timelines aside from religious words appeared due to the party's aspirations.
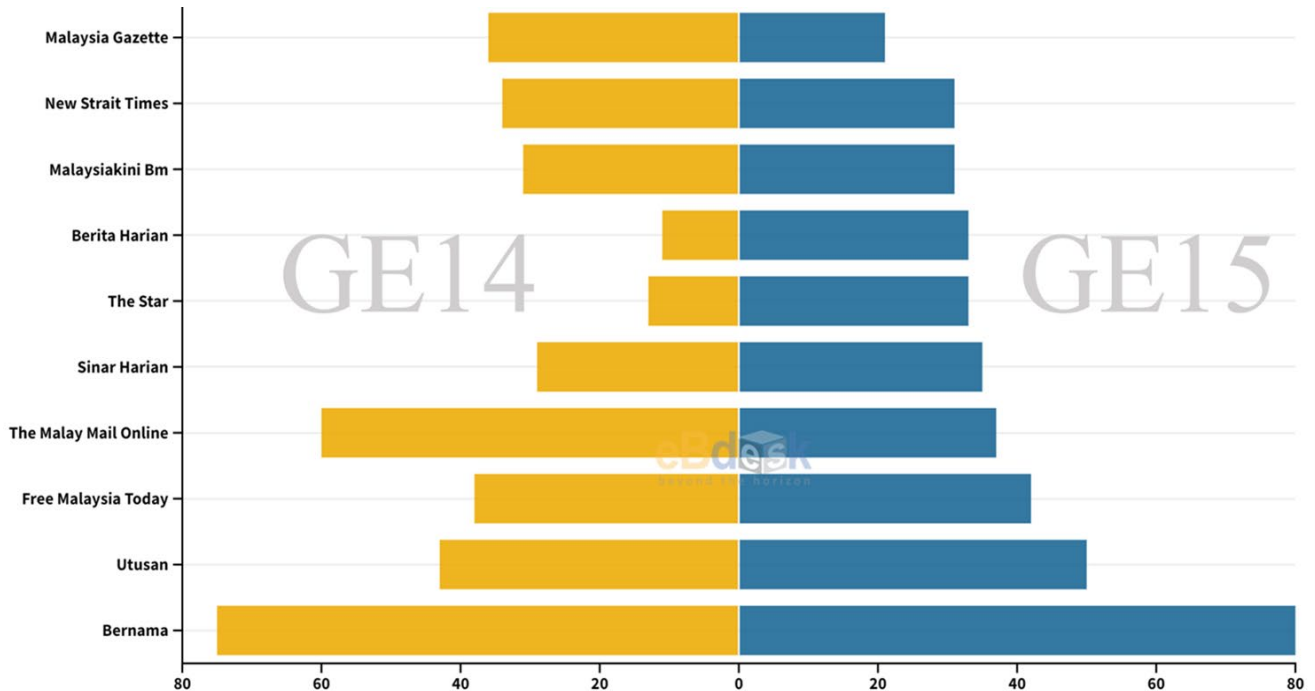
Top Keywords from Statements for PAS Leaders

15th General Election: National Narratives

Garrisoned Resources

News Counts According to National Narrative

By filtering the news title using the national narratives keywords, the data shows the top ten media which has a well-balanced between the English and Malay media with Bernama appearing as the top media for both timelines.

Further analysis shows that most of the media outlets are directly affiliated with the political party in the nation, especially UMNO-BN as four of the media are either UMNO-owned or MCA-owned.

Key Takes

- Throughout the analysis, it is evident that the party leaders have emphasized the conventional national narratives during the electoral campaign.

- Splintering from UMNO, PPBM's narration appeared to be closely inclined with UMNO portraying uncanny similarities between the party leaders' statements.

- However, despite being labeled as radical, PAS' consistency in its narrations has proven to be fruitful in the GE15 especially when it has won the most seats and with UMNO is still configuring the best pathway to helm back the government.

Malaysia Indicator