

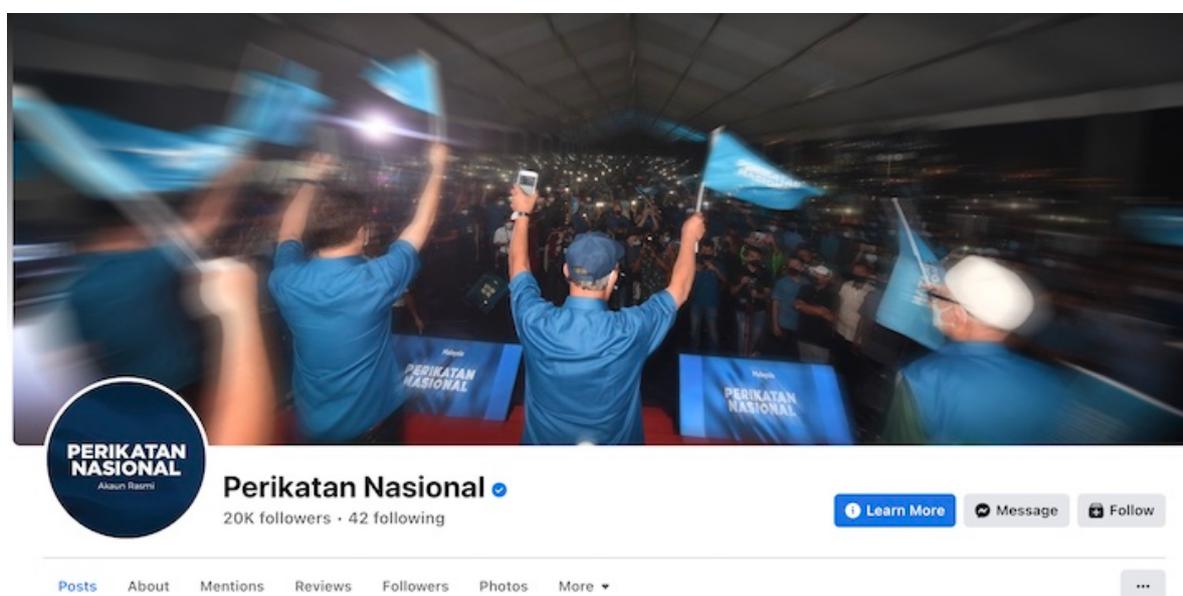
PERSPECTIVE

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New Battle Lines Appear in the Wake of Malaysia’s Historic Enfranchisement Bill

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The Constitutional Amendment Act 2019 (“CA2019”) will have different effects in different parts of Malaysia. Bersatu holds the highest number of most-affected seats, and PAS is the most-affected old party, making the Perikatan Nasional (“PN”) coalition vulnerable. Photo: FaceBook page of Perikatan Nasional at <https://www.facebook.com/perikatann>.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Constitutional Amendment Act 2019 (“CA2019”) was passed by a unanimous vote in the Malaysian parliament. Every political party assumed they had a political advantage by expanding the nationwide voter base from 15.22 million to 21.02 million.
- In fact, CA2019 has different effects in different parts of the country. To illustrate the impact of CA2019 on each seat and political party, this paper calculates the percentage of new voters that the runner-up in GE14 needs to overturn the majority of the victor. The most-affected seats are thus the ones where the percentage needed is lowest, and vice versa.
- Overall, the least-affected seats are primarily urban, Chinese-majority, and held by the opposition parties, DAP and PKR. On the other hand, the most-affected seats are Bumiputera-majority, semi-urban and rural with low economic status, and held by a mix of large and small parties.
- Among the most-affected seats, half are held by current ministers and deputy ministers, introducing an unprecedented level of vulnerability to high-stature politicians in the country.
- Bersatu holds the highest number of most-affected seats, and PAS is the most-affected old party, making the Perikatan Nasional (“PN”) coalition vulnerable. Amanah holds the second highest number of most-affected seats, potentially making them the weakest link in the main opposition coalition, Pakatan Harapan (“PH”).

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's Constitutional Amendment Act 2019 ("CA2019"), which lowered the voting age and created automatic voting registration, was passed by a unanimous vote in both houses of parliament. It appeared that every party assumed that they had a political advantage in enabling 5.8 million new voters into the system, and bringing the latest total to 21.02 million. Approximately 6.85% of voters are now between 18 and 20 years old, and mostly based in urban areas.¹ The then-coalition government, PH, pushed strongly for lowering the voting age, as they had probably been the primary beneficiaries of youth votes in the past. Barisan Nasional ("BN") and Islamic party PAS, on the other hand, insisted on automatic voter registration; this was most likely due to their assumption that their rural-centred voter base would expand if the logistic difficulties of registration were removed.

The literature on new enfranchisement efforts similar to that created by CA2019, has studied their effects on inequality, economic development, welfare, and communication quality between citizens and elected representatives. This paper analyses the political effects of CA2019 on parliamentary seats and political parties in order to identify the constituencies where political battles will be enhanced in the coming general elections.

The most recent political composition—from May 2022—shall be used in the analysis. Remarkably, a series of high-profile defections have substantially changed the composition of the Malaysian parliament since the last general election in 2018 ("GE14"). Three different prime ministers and three different parties have spearheaded governance of the country over a short span of four years, with the latest seeing a return of UMNO with its vice president, Ismail Sabri, becoming the country's prime minister and the party's unlikely figurehead.²

Table 1: Parliamentary composition of the first government post-GE14, between 10 May 2018 to 10 March 2020

Government			Opposition		
Pakatan Harapan	PKR	47	Barisan Nasional	UMNO	54
	DAP	42		PBB	13
	Bersatu	13		PRS	3
	Amanah	11		MIC	2
	Subtotal	113		PDP	2
Warisan	8	MCA		1	
Total	121	SUPP		1	
		PBS		1	
		UPKO		1	
		PBRS		1	
		Subtotal		79	
		Muafakat Nasional		PAS	18
		United Sabah Alliance		STAR	1
		Independent		3	
		Total	Total	101	

Table 2: Parliamentary composition of the third government post-GE14, from 21 August 2021 to the present (May 2022)³

Government (includes confidence and supply)			Opposition			Neutral		
Barisan Nasional	UMNO	37	Pakatan Harapan	DAP	42	Barisan Nasional	UMNO	1
	MCA	2		PKR	36			
	MIC	1		Amanah	11			
	PBRS	1		UPKO	1			
	Subtotal	41		Subtotal	90			
Perikatan Nasional	Bersatu	31	Warisan	7				
	PAS	17	Pejuang	4				
	STAR	1	PBB	1				
	Subtotal	49	Muda	1				
GPS	PBB	13	Total			103		
	PRS	2						
	PDP	2						
	SUPP	1						
	Subtotal	18						
PBM		3						
PBS		1						
Independent		4						
Total		116						

Note: Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah from UMNO, a long-time prime minister hopeful, has taken a stance of neutrality to the current government led by his party, and has conducted meetings with opposition parties independently.

Table 1 and 2 illustrate the parliamentary composition changes between the first post-GE14 government and the present. Political changes at the federal level also affected state governments. Five state governments – Sabah, Melaka, Johor, Kedah, and Perak – changed hands, with four to BN, and one—Kedah—to PAS. As a result of deaths, election petitions, and a resignation, five parliamentary by-elections have also taken place. Including by-election outcomes in the final analysis is still acceptable, notwithstanding the lower-than-usual turnout rates; in fact, only one seat, Tanjung Piai, changed hands, and these results could more accurately have been reflecting prevailing political sentiments.

METHODOLOGY

To analyse the independent effect of CA2019, the GE14 results for each seat shall be used as a benchmark. Three groups of votes are then taken into account: GE14 winner's votes, GE14 runner-up's votes, and the new voter group. The difference between the GE14 winner's votes

and the GE14 runner-up's votes is considered the majority of that seat. A mathematical calculation is performed to determine the percentage from the new voter group required by the GE14 runner-up to gain the majority in each seat.

As a general rule, the lower the percentage of new voters needed to overturn the GE14 majority, the more affected that seat will be by CA2019. Conversely, the higher the percentage of new voters needed to gain that effect, the less affected is the seat. For instance, a seat in Negeri Sembilan where the GE14 majority can be overturned by a mere 1.44% of new voters is more affected by CA2019 than a seat in Sarawak where the majority can be overturned only with support from 99.70% of new voters.

Once this condition is computed for every seat, they are ranked on a table from the most-affected to least-affected, with the degree of safety classification being as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Degree of safety classifications based on the percentage of support from new voters needed to overturn the current seat majority⁴

Percentage of new voter support needed to overturn the GE14 majority	Degree of safety
Less than or equals to 5%	Very unsafe / marginal
5.01% to 10%	Unsafe
10.01% to 25%	Safe
Above 25%	Very safe / stronghold

This paper assumes that the votes that had been received by the winner and the runner-up remain unchanged, with neither party gaining or losing from the past general election. It also assumes that the nationwide three-cornered fight of GE14 remains. Whilst it is reasonable to assume that a straight fight is unlikely in the next general election, the recent sprouting of new parties and coalitions may mean that the next general election will be more competitive, with vote share received by parties spread thin across more players.

These two assumptions give rise to a limitation in the methodology. It cannot function as an election simulation of the GE15 results, nor can it predict an exact number of seats distributed by their degree of safety. Instead, this paper serves to broadly delineate the potential political impact of CA2019 on each seat and on political parties by taking the percentage of new voters and referencing the GE14 winner's vote in each seat.

Table 4: Top 20 of seats least-affected by CA2019

No.	Seat	State	Current party	Majority	Percentage of new voters needed to overturn majority	Urbanisation
1	Tanjong	Pulau Pinang	DAP	29,599	458.19%	Urban
2	Bagan	Pulau Pinang	DAP	43,902	248.09%	Urban
3	Bukit Bintang	Kuala Lumpur	DAP	37,260	246.43%	Urban
4	Bukit Gelugor	Pulau Pinang	DAP	55,951	227.82%	Urban
5	Jelutong	Pulau Pinang	DAP	38,,171	221.20%	Urban
6	Kepong	Kuala Lumpur	DAP	51628	217.95%	Urban
7	Bukit Bendera	Pulau Pinang	DAP	40,731	213.03%	Urban
8	Cheras	Kuala Lumpur	DAP	49,665	209.47%	Urban
9	Bukit Mertajam	Pulau Pinang	DAP	52,877	179.98%	Urban
10	Ipoh Timor	Perak	DAP	42,797	161.95%	Urban
11	Kota Kinabalu	Sabah	DAP	24,086	157.56%	Urban
12	Ipoh Barat	Perak	DAP	45,724	155.74%	Urban
13	Damansara	Selangor	DAP	106,903	155.10%	Urban
14	Batu Kawan	Pulau Pinang	DAP	33,553	155.01%	Urban
15	Seputeh	Kuala Lumpur	DAP	56,059	153.89%	Urban
16	Bayan Baru	Pulau Pinang	PKR	37,751	151.47%	Urban
17	Batu Gajah	Perak	DAP	43,868	144.64%	Urban
18	Klang	Selangor	DAP	78,773	137.17%	Urban
19	Batang Sadong	Sarawak	PBB	12,328	135.64%	Rural
20	Kota Melaka	Melaka	DAP	49,175	129.22%	Urban

We start by looking at the seats that are least affected by CA2019. Inclusive of the seats shown in Table 4, 30 seats require percentages of above 100% for the GE14 majority to be lost. This means that even if all the new voters turn out to vote against the incumbent, it will still not be sufficient for the seat to change hands. An extremely high vote-majority and a relatively low new voter percentage, coupled with a pre-existing electoral malapportionment,⁵ have created these strongholds.

Unsurprisingly, the least affected seats are overwhelmingly urban (primarily in Pulau Pinang and Kuala Lumpur) and Chinese-majority, where DAP controls 90% of the seats and the rest are under PKR and PBB. Among them, almost all seats have above-average median income levels, with half of the seats belonging to the top 20% quartile of the richest seats in Malaysia.

The least affected seat is Tanjong, a seat currently held by Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow. Historically, this seat has symbolic significance as it was held by party leaders like Lim Chong Eu and Koh Tsu Koon from Gerakan, and Lim Kit Siang from DAP. Chow's party, DAP, first won this seat in 1986, with Lim Kit Siang, and has held onto it for 36 years since. With 53,089 total voters, this seat was considered a highly governable territory, making DAP's retention of this seat a virtual certainty, solidifying the party's control as state government. The second least-affected seat followed the same tenor, is Bagan, which is currently held by Pulau Pinang's former chief minister and former DAP secretary-general, Lim Guan Eng.

A notable seat to watch in the list is Batu Gajah from Perak, which is currently held by V Sivakumar, the deputy secretary-general of DAP, and also the first ethnic Indian to hold the seat. Though new voters alone will not overturn the massive vote-majority of 43,868, the seat has a high absolute poverty incidence of 7.3%,⁶ and an unemployment rate of 5.4%, both of which are above the country average. Median income in Batu Gajah is only RM3,870 – the lowest among the seats in Table 4. While DAP's current hold is the longest of any party, the seat had switched to DAP's rival, MCA, twice before, and one of the state seats under Batu Gajah, Tronoh, had a rare DAP defection by Paul Yong to Parti Bangsa Malaysia ("PBM"), which exposed vulnerability and threatened to shake up party dynamics in the locale.

Studying least-affected seats is also a study of malapportionment. CA2019 exacerbated pre-existing malapportionment that made many seats hyper-uncompetitive; any serious challenge against the incumbents in these areas is highly unlikely. Sabah-based Warisan's recent attempts to pull disgruntled DAP members in Pulau Pinang to contest against their former party will not amount to anything more than a symbolic gesture. Electoral attention will not be centred on these sure-win seats, and the middle-class voters from these seats are likely to be ignored where federal policy discussions are concerned. These voters have to rely on the state governments to serve them, and this will cement the impression of DAP being the de facto government in the eyes of Penangites.

Table 5: Top 20 of seats most-affected by CA2019

No	Seat	State	Current party	Majority	Percentage of new voters needed to overturn majority	Urbanisation
1	Keningau	Sabah	STAR	45	0.14%	Rural
2	Tasek Gelugor	Pulau Pinang	Bersatu	81	0.48%	Semi Urban
3	Bagan Serai	Perak	Bersatu	172	0.86%	Semi Urban
4	Jasin	Melaka	UMNO	219	1.07%	Semi Urban
5	Kuala Pilah	Negeri Sembilan	Bersatu	200	1.44%	Rural
6	Lumut	Perak	Amanah	400	1.95%	Semi Urban
7	Ayer Hitam	Johor	MCA	303	2.22%	Semi Urban
8	Papar	Sabah	Warisan	325	2.24%	Semi Urban
9	Jerai	Kedah	PAS	539	2.26%	Semi Urban
10	Libaran	Sabah	Bersatu	678	3.41%	Semi Urban
11	Selangau	Sarawak	PSB	486	3.56%	Rural
12	Tapah	Perak	MIC	614	4.41%	Rural
13	Baling	Kedah	UMNO	1074	4.50%	Rural
14	Pontian	Johor	UMNO	833	4.53%	Rural
15	Sungai Besar	Selangor	Bersatu	714	4.85%	Semi Urban
16	Tampin	Negeri Sembilan	Amanah	1,002	5.26%	Semi Urban
17	Pasir Puteh	Kelantan	PAS	1,360	5.36%	Semi Urban
18	Ranau	Sabah	Bersatu	1,076	5.44%	Rural
19	Kota Marudu	Sabah	PBS	1,774	6.22%	Rural
20	Jempol	Negeri Sembilan	UMNO	1,631	6.83%	Semi Urban

Compared to the seats least affected, Table 5 shows a vastly different picture. While the picture is less uniform than Table 4, it is safe to conclude that Bumiputera-majority seats dominate the list of most-affected seats, with Malay-majority seats in West Malaysia being most prominent. In terms of urbanity, 70% of the seats are semi-urban seats with a rural lean, contrasting to a total-urban picture in Table 4. Other than Sabah showing five seats, the most affected seats are spread across the states rather evenly. The economic status also varies, with 75% of the seats in Table 5 having below-average median income, and a poverty incidence and unemployment rate above the national average. The distribution of political parties also varies, with smaller parties like Bersatu, Amanah, MCA, and MIC taking up noticeable shares.

Interestingly, 10 out of 20 of the most affected seats are currently held by ministers and deputy ministers in Ismail Sabri's cabinet. Granted, the current cabinet size has been criticised for being bloated, with 69 of the 116 government-aligned MPs appointed as ministers or deputies.

Still, it is generally rare for cabinet members to lose their seats, since they have the potential largesse of selectively deploying economic development funds in their constituencies to amass political influence. CA2019, however, may have created an unprecedented level of vulnerability for them.

The three ministers holding the most-affected seats are the Minister of Transport, Wee Ka Siong, the Minister for Human Resources, Saravanan Murugan, and the Minister for Sabah and Sarawak Affairs, Maximus Ongkili. Not only will a loss embarrass these high-statured ministers, these three seats also hold a special significance for these ministers' parties. The Ayer Hitam seat of Wee Ka Siong, MCA's president, is one of the two remaining under MCA control, whereas Saravanan's seat of Tapah is the only MIC seat won in GE14 and is considered the party's last fortress. Maximus's Kota Marudu is a stronghold seat that he has held since 2004, and remains the only seat for his Sabah-based party. In particular, Kota Marudu is the second poorest seat in the country, with a median income of RM2,424, a poverty incidence of 44.20% and an unemployment rate of 8.60%. It is conceivable that the economic problems of these areas will simmer into political dissatisfaction, and a small number of angry new voters would then be enough to flip the table.

The six other seats currently held by deputy ministers are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Deputy minister seats most affected by the CA2019

No.	Seat	Percentage of support from new voters needed to overturn GE14 majority	Member of Parliament	Party	Cabinet position
1	Tasek Gelugor	0.48%	Shabudin Yahaya	Bersatu	Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Parliament and Law)
2	Bagan Serai	0.86%	Noor Azmi Ghazali	Bersatu	Deputy Minister of Health I
3	Jasin	1.07%	Ahmad Hamzah	UMNO	Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Industries I
4	Kuala Pilah	1.44%	Eddin Syazlee Shith	Bersatu	Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economic Affairs)
5	Sungai Besar	4.85%	Muslimin Yahaya	Bersatu	Deputy Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperative
6	Pasir Puteh	5.36%	Nik Muhammad Zawawi Salleh	PAS	Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Industries II
7	Ranau	5.44%	Jonathan Yasin	Bersatu	Deputy Minister of Home Affairs II

The deputy ministers holding the most-affected seats, as seen in Table 6, are likely to suffer the same dilemma as the ministers in Ayer Hitam, Tapah and Kota Marudu.

Three other most-affected seats that are worth paying attention to are Keningau, Selangau, and Pontian. Keningau, a hilly constituency with low access to piped water and high poverty incidence, has been held by the Kitingan brothers since 1986, but Jeffrey Kitingan has changed political parties three times since 2018—and the seat was won by a meagre 45 votes. This means that Warisan and/or BN putting up a decent candidate would stand a good chance of overturning the Kitingan hold over the seat. On a similar wavelength, Baru Bian of Selangau, a constituency with comparable poverty to Keningau, has also changed parties three times, including being part of the infamous “Sheraton Move” faction led by minister Azmin Ali which caused the downfall of the PH government. Baru’s opponents, especially GPS, have been eyeing to defeat him, as evidenced in a five-cornered contest during the Sarawak state elections in 2021. However, the ethnic Lun Bawang politician managed to retain the seat, proving the

strength of his personal appeal to local voters. Lastly, Pontian is also an interesting seat to watch as it involves a high-profile UMNO politician, Ahmad Maslan, who is the current BN secretary-general and a former deputy minister. Pontian being already a marginal seat, the influx of new voters with unknown allegiances will put the veteran politician at risk, especially given his proneness to gaffes.

A few implications follow from the above analysis of the most-affected seats. First, the main battlegrounds will now shift to Malay-majority semi-urban and rural seats, as further observed in Table 7 below. The distance between a safe and an unsafe seat is now widened dramatically, lending credence to the notion that resource-scarce political parties will be devising political strategies and expend resources in battleground seats at the expense of safe seats. Furthermore, voters, especially youths residing in urban areas will receive less political attention, and in turn, become more disinterested or disillusioned with politics.

The racial nature of the least affected and most affected should certainly not be ignored. Table 4 shows that the least affected seats are mostly Chinese-majority seats, whereas Table 5 reveals the most affected areas to be Malay-majority seats. The political issues that get highlighted will subsequently be affected; politics that pays attention to one race and ignores the other would enhance further the already highly polarized electorate, and for subsequent elections ahead.

Table 7: Demographics of the states most affected by CA2019

No.	State	% of battleground seats (Below or 25% new voters to overturn majority)	% of unsafe seats (below or 10% new voters to overturn majority)	Race-majority of battleground seats (average)	Urbanisation of battleground seats (average)
1	Negeri Sembilan	63%	38%	Malay majority	Semi Urban
2	Sabah	56%	40%	Non-Malay Bumiputera majority	Rural
3	Terengganu	50%	13%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
4	Kelantan	41%	6%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
5	Kedah	40%	20%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
6	Sarawak	38%	10%	Non-Malay Bumiputera majority	Rural
7	Perak	33%	17%	Mixed	Semi Urban (rural lean)
8	Perlis	33%	0%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
9	Pahang	36%	7%	Mixed	Semi Urban (rural lean)
10	Melaka	29%	14%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
11	Johor	20%	12%	Mixed	Semi Urban (rural lean)
12	Kuala Lumpur	17%	8%	Mixed	Urban
13	Selangor	14%	5%	Malay majority	Semi Urban (rural lean)
14	Pulau Pinang	8%	8%	Malay majority	Semi Urban

Second, much attention will be paid to Sabah as it is the state with the highest number of most-affected (or “unsafe”) seats, as seen in Table 7. Coincidentally, the most-affected seats in Sabah are also seats with the worst poverty incidence, unemployment rate, and inequality. People with the least economic strength will now have the largest political strength in determining the future. This is one of the positive effects of CA2019. Politicians who seek to win these seats will have to campaign on issues closest to the voters; the traditional means of buying off voters will be harder with a larger swathe of voters being involved.

Third, once Sabah is removed from the analysis, the CA2019 effect on smaller parties become obvious. Notably, the PH component party, Amanah, has a high number of most-affected seats that may be lost. Taken together with the analysis from Table 4, the dynamics of PH would change, with Amanah becoming the weakest link and DAP carrying the coalition. The perception of PH being controlled by DAP would become harder to change, and would demand even more than before, a Malay-based party to play the role of neutralizer. Other smaller parties, such as Bersatu, PSB, STAR, MCA, and MIC, will similarly find it increasingly hard to win as there are more voters to persuade now.

Lastly, the disproportionate number of cabinet members holding the most-affected seats will also change political behaviour. More development projects may target these constituencies, and more campaign funds may be expended during elections to reflect the higher number of voters. Since these seats also happen to be poorer, voters may experience a net gain in welfare and development, though the risk of corruption and bribery may also skyrocket.

Table 8: Political parties most affected by CA2019, ranked by safety of seats

Party	Very unsafe (5% and below)	Unsafe (5.01%-10%)	Safe (10.01%-25%)	Very safe (Above 25%)
Bersatu	17%	14%	17%	52%
Amanah	9%	18%	18%	55%
Warisan	13%	13%	25%	50%
PAS	6%	12%	24%	59%
UMNO	8%	8%	25%	60%
PKR	0%	5%	24%	70%
DAP	0%	0%	12%	88%

As observed in Table 8, the party with the highest percentage of very unsafe and unsafe seats is Bersatu at 31%, followed by Amanah at 27%. Notably, most of the seats currently held by Bersatu are defected seats originally won by PKR and UMNO. This is not a coincidence as defection offers were targeted at candidates from marginal seats. Not only is Bersatu now in a precarious position from holding a high number of unsafe seats, additional punishment from voters for prior defections could also follow.

Worse, PAS is the most affected old party, and holds over 18% of seats considered unsafe.⁷ The current PN coalition of PAS and Bersatu thus risks a poor electoral showing, and potentially even elimination. PN will have to decide between defending their marginal seats or to go on the offensive in other parties' marginal seats in order to retain political relevance.

Furthermore, UMNO's percentage of unsafe seats appears substantially higher than for PKR and DAP; this lends credence to the notion that PH, with the exception of Amanah, will be the

primary beneficiaries of CA2019. Losing the 16% of unsafe seats would deflate UMNO's chances of being the largest party in parliament and their chances at forming the government.

The numbers of Amanah, PKR, and DAP confirm the hypothesis above that DAP will likely be the main anchor for the PH coalition, with Amanah becoming more of a laggard than before.

CONCLUSION

Knowing which seats are the most vulnerable would shed light on where politicians are likely to expend campaigning resources in the coming elections. This paper has shown that the election battlegrounds are likely to be semi-urban and rural seats that are Bumiputera- and Malay-majority, where median income, unemployment, and inequality are below the national average. On the same vein, urban seats that are Chinese-majority and wealthier are likely to be ignored; long-term malapportionment has exacerbated the difference between each seat, making campaigning in such seats a poor use of election resources today.

For new voters, the effects of CA2019 are not evenly distributed. Voters in the most-affected seats have greater opportunity than those in the least-affected seats to influence the outcome of the election. Smaller parties will also find it increasingly hard to compete.

ENDNOTES

¹ Chai, J. 2022. "The Paradox of Lowering the Voting Age – Expanded Enfranchisement Devalued by More Unequal Representation". <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/articles-commentaries/iseas-perspective/2022-63-the-paradox-of-malaysias-lowering-of-voting-age-expanded-enfranchisement-devalued-by-more-unequal-representation-by-james-chai/>

² UMNO has three vice presidents in total; Mahdzir Khalid and Mohamed Khaled Nordin are the other two.

³ The current parliamentary composition adds up to only 220 seats out of the required 222 seats, as 2 seats have been left vacant and unfilled following the deaths of the parliamentarians for Batu Sapi and Gerik.

⁴ Past election analyses considered seats with a 5% or lower vote-majority as marginal seats in threat of changing hands. This range informs the two lowest bands of the classification in Table 3. At the upper limit, 25% is determined as the cut-off point as the two groups that make up the new voter cohort – youth voters and previously unregistered voters – are traditionally considered to be politically disinterested. Election Commission deputy chairman Azmi Sharom has surmised that turnout among the new voter groups will not be high due to general disinterest in politics, and the recent Johor state election did not refute this. The average turnout rate of Malaysia in the last five general elections was 76.44%, thus making an approximation of 50% a conservative and acceptable assumption of how the new voter groups will behave.

⁵ Malapportionment is an electoral manipulation where the seats are deeply unequal in voter size, violating the longstanding democratic requirement of one-person, one-vote. See Chai, J. 2022. The

“Paradox of Lowering the Voting Age – Expanded Enfranchisement Devalued by More Unequal Representation”. <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/articles-commentaries/iseas-perspective/2022-63-the-paradox-of-malaysias-lowering-of-voting-age-expanded-enfranchisement-devalued-by-more-unequal-representation-by-james-chai/>.

⁶ The absolute poverty incidence is calculated by taking the percentage of the population in the constituency with monthly income below the absolute poverty line set in 2019.

⁷ For this paper, an old party is defined as one with at least 20 years of history since its formation. See table below states the year each party was formed, and how old each is.

Party	Formation Year	Years Since Formation
UMNO	1946	76 years
PAS	1951	70 years
DAP	1965	56 years
PKR	1998	19 years
Amanah	2015	6 years
Bersatu	2016	5 years
Warisan	2016	5 years

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