



Minorities rights, and the law in Malaysia

by Thaatchayini Kananatu, London and New York, Routledge, 2022, 224 pp.,
€38.99, (Paperback), ISBN: 9781032400488

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To cite this article: Nia Fatmawati (02 Jan 2024): Minorities rights, and the law in Malaysia, Asian Ethnicity, DOI: [10.1080/14631369.2023.2299373](https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2023.2299373)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2023.2299373>



Published online: 02 Jan 2024.



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BOOK REVIEW

Minorities rights, and the law in Malaysia, by Thaatchaayini Kananatu, London and New York, Routledge, 2022, 224 pp., €38.99, (Paperback), ISBN: 9781032400488

Minority rights and the law in Malaysia explores the concepts of race, the law, and the related issue of minority rights for Indians in Malaysia. The Indian community is treated as a minority race in this context, and one that does not react much and is quiet. Most often, Indians in Malaysia are Indian Tamils, by heritage and the middle class is a community of workers in the plantation sector. This book is fascinating because it provides detailed information about British colonialism from a policy and legal perspective when the British colonized Malaysia from 1890 to 1956. The existence of the Indian race in Malaysia is related to policy and racialization from a legal perspective. There was employment mobilization in the Indian community from 1940 to 1957 until 2018. The Indian race in Malaysia, which tends to be a silent race, experienced a shift into a social collective movement called the Hindu Right Action Force (HINDRAF).

The big concept in this book regarding the Indian race in Malaysia is explained in six parts. Part one discusses India, an ethnocultural group with heterogeneous characteristics. The history of ethnic Indians is that they were brought to British Malaya in 1890 and used as laborers during the colonial period. Indians continued to survive in Malaysia until postcolonial. The well-known characteristic of Indians is that they are an ethnic group that is silent and obedient in politics and government. However, it can be highlighted that the ethnic Indians who are members of HINDRAF who come from Tamil Indian descent as contract workers are an ethnic minority who are marginalized in the social and economic fields in Malaysia. There are complaints regarding the claims of Indian people's economic and religious rights, which have been demonstrated through mobilization.

This book is very detailed and structured because it explains the journey of Indian ethnicity through trade, military, and Indianization related to Hindu and Buddhist culture in the northern Malay peninsula. The big concept of Indian ethnicity in Malaya is also proven by archeology, historical evidence from Hinduism and Buddhism, and temples in the Malay kingdom. The history of Indian ethnicity is well explained in this book.

Part two explains how to mobilize ethnic Indians in relation to the rights of ethnic Indians in colonial and postcolonial Malaya. This mobilization is still linked to human rights proposed to Britain by the British prime minister. Petitions were submitted to the Queen of England by ethnic Indians during the colonial period as a lawsuit against the concept of ethnic Indian class action. Ethnic and cultural mobilization is the literature review in this book. Research on law and human rights also provides a theoretical basis. The criticism of this book is that it must have a theoretical basis regarding the law, culture, and multiculturalism. This book is claimed to be the result of research, so it needs to explain precise data collection methods and relevant sources of information because it explains a lot about events.

Ethno-cultural and heterogeneous groups and vertical and horizontal divisions are descriptions of Indian ethnicity in Malaysia. The Indian ethnic group, which has many differences from the Malay ethnic group, such as differences in ethno-culture, ethnicity, regional origin, language, and religion, is a factor in horizontal and vertical divisions in society. If we look at it from a socio-economic perspective, Indian ethnicity also seems to have

a caste system and social status, which shows class differences and influences vertical conflict. These differences make India's ethnic identity very diverse and complex.

Physically racist spaces occur because of colonial labor policies that occurred in Malaya. The separation of Malay, Indian, and Chinese ethnicities was carried out socio-economically by creating a socio-economic hierarchy. Law plays a role in the socio-economic and racial structuring of the three main ethnic groups in Malaya. This can be seen from the development of class-based racial segregation. As a book that discusses events that occurred a long time ago, it is necessary to add authentic evidence in the form of more complete data or images so that readers can better understand the information this book conveys. For a historical event, visualization is beneficial for readers to understand big, essential concepts better. The rights of ethnic Indians from an educational perspective are also fundamental. An overview of the rights to education for ethnic Indian children should also be presented. Education for children from the primary school level is critical to discuss. Schools are an inseparable part of realizing the welfare and struggle for the rights of the Indian ethnic minority in Malaysia.

The book, which is the result of this research, is fascinating, with the research results in the form of historical information regarding three critical pieces of information: mobilization, formation, a framework for complaints regarding ethnic minorities and their rights, and mobilization strategies. The political perspective of Indian ethnicity in Malaysia is also discussed and is an exciting part. This concept starts from ethnic Indian leaders in organizations outside the government, ethnic Indians as civil society and activists, and Indian politicians. Criticism of this book is that a complete explanation and clear visualization do not accompany the explanation separate from the third contemporary phase from 1990 to 2018 because it depicts an incident involving the mobilization of the Hindu RIGHTS Action Force at a general meeting.

This book is highly recommended to increase the knowledge of international readers, namely researchers, academics, and educators interested in ethnicity, law, human rights, and society. This book can also be used as a learning resource regarding the science of migration, labor, law in Asia, and learning about Southeast Asia.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2023.2299373>

