

The Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation: The Allegations Against Burhanuddin al-Helmi for Conspiring with Sukarno, 1963

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Abstract: Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmi's pursuit of nationalism and political struggles were perceived as left-wing factions or radical because of the absence of his collaboration with the UMNO and the British colonial while striving for Malaya's independence. The PAS was his political battleground in the 1950s. This discourse offers an account of Burhanuddin's personal experience related to his detentions, including his imprisonment during the period wherein Tunku Abdul Rahman led the government. He was accused of conspiring with Sukarno to thwart efforts to establish the Federation of Malaysia. In addition, Burhanuddin was also charged with being a traitor who had jeopardized his country's security and the government in power back then. On the 28th of January, 1965, he was detained with the charge of conniving with Sukarno to fudge the creation of Malaysia and forming a pro-Indonesia government in exile, specifically in Karachi. This allegation subsequently halted the establishment of the 'National Front' which was instrumental for Indonesia in opposing the formation of Malaysia. It also ended all attempts and conspiracies for such purpose on the 16th of September, 1963. Additionally, this writing also exposes the reasons behind Tunku's actions against Burhanuddin and how the latter defended himself. The findings showed that the allegations against him were purely defamatory and politically motivated. The discussion is based on the analysis of various sources, from personal letters and papers to studies based on archival research methods that analyze documents. This research uses materials and data from the National Archives of Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia.

Abstrak: Perjuangan Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmi terhadap nasionalisme dan perjuangan politik dianggap sebagai faksi sayap kiri atau radikal karena tidak adanya kolaborasinya dengan Partai UMNO dan kolonial Inggris saat memperjuangkan kemerdekaan Malaya. Partai PAS adalah medan pertempuran politiknya di tahun 1950-an. Wacana ini menawarkan pengalaman pribadi Burhanuddin terkait penahanannya, termasuk pemenjarannya pada masa pemerintahan dipimpin oleh Tunku Abdul Rahman. Beliau dituduh bersekongkol dengan Presiden Sukarno untuk menggagalkan upaya pembentukan Federasi Malaysia. Selain itu, Burhanuddin juga didakwa sebagai pengkhianat yang membahayakan keamanan negaranya dan pemerintahan yang berkuasa saat itu. Pada 28 Januari 1965, ia ditahan dengan tuduhan berkomplot dengan Sukarno untuk memalsukan pembentukan Malaysia dan membentuk pemerintahan pro-Indonesia di pengasingan, khususnya di Karachi, Pakistan. Tuduhan ini kemudian menghentikan pembentukan 'Front Nasional' yang berperan penting bagi Indonesia dalam menentang pembentukan Malaysia. Itu juga mengakhiri semua upaya dan konspirasi untuk tujuan tersebut pada 16 September 1963. Selain itu, tulisan ini juga mengungkap alasan di balik tindakan Tunku terhadap Burhanuddin dan bagaimana Burhanuddin membela diri. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa tuduhan terhadapnya murni memfitnah dan bermotivasi politik. Pembahasan didasarkan pada analisis berbagai sumber, mulai dari surat dan makalah pribadi hingga kajian berdasarkan metode penelitian arsip yang menganalisis dokumen dari Malaya, Indonesia, Singapura, Filipina, dan Brunei. Penelitian ini menggunakan bahan dan data dari Arsip Nasional Malaysia, Singapura, Indonesia, dan Perpustakaan Nasional Malaysia dan Indonesia.



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INTRODUCTION

The establishment of Malaysia as a new nation took place on September 16, 1963, after the independence of *Tanah Melayu* which was also known as Malaya on August 31, 1957. The declaration should have already taken place on August 31, 1957. However, it was postponed to September 16, 1963. This was so because of Indonesia's military assault on the *Persekutuan Tanah Melayu* (the Federation of Malaya) border indicating their upright protest against the formation of Malaysia. The British recognizes the newly formed Malaysia as '*Malaysia Raya*' or 'the Greater Malaysia' (CO 1030/608 File, 1961). It was known by the government of Malaya that there were neighboring countries such as Singapore, the Sultanate of Brunei, Sabah, and Sarawak which had not gained independence from the British colonial. Tunku Abdul Rahman had therefore invited them to come with Malaya in the formation of a new federation, hence, gaining automatic independence. The proposal sparked a mixed reaction among politicians from both sides of the Federation Parliament of Malaya, namely those who agreed and opposed Tunku Abdul Rahman's idea. Those reactions resulted in political polemics, including those related to Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi who happened to be among the opposition government. His boldness in assailing Tunku Abdul Rahman's proposal aroused many aspersions and allegations against the *Parti Perikatan* (Alliance Party). Tunku Abdul Rahman had placed him under tight surveillance due to his controversial reactions and deprecating remarks. All charges and calumnies against him had badly ruined his reputation and derailed his political career.

Aside from the allegations of partaking in the efforts of failing the creation of Malaysia together with President Sukarno, he also faced legal action for several charges. For example, Dr. Burhanuddin's credibility as a representative of Besut, Terengganu, located on the east coast of Malaysia was claimed in a General Election taking place on April 26, 1964. He was charged with bribery in March 1964 and was found guilty. He was then slapped with a fine of \$25,000.00 for illegally chairing the board of directors in the Malay-German Shipping Company in Terengganu (*The Straits Times*, 1964, January 15; *Berita Harian*, 1964, February 20; *Berita Harian*, 1964, October 10; *Utusan Melayu*, 1964, July 29; *The Sunday Times*, 1969, October 26). The fine was equivalent to \$40 per day and was set for February 24, 1961 and November 19, 1962. However, Dr. Burhanuddin refuted the allegations, justifying that the said company was established for the

underprivileged Malays to perform hajj in Makkah. He further elaborated that his appointment as the company's chairman was not official yet. He bought the company's share worth \$15,000 in order to assume the chairmanship and commence the company's operation. His ultimate goal was to allow the underprivileged Malays to perform their *Haj* in a manageable and affordable way (Muzammil, 2015, p. 297). The court, however, deemed his justifications unacceptable due to his positions as a politician and parliamentarian. Dr. Burhanuddin was then sentenced under the provision of the fourth chapter in the Constitution of Malaysia, Chapter 4, Article 48 (B) which automatically aborted his appointment as a parliamentarian (Muzammil, 2015, p. 297).

Nonetheless, Dr. Burhanuddin did not give up. Through his lawyer, Wan Mustapha Haji Asri, he appealed for the lawsuit to be legally prosecuted again. However, the appeal was declined (*Berita Harian*, 1964, January 15; *Berita Harian*, 1964, February 19). Thus, he had to pay his fine in a huge amount of more than \$2,000.00, then his position as a member of parliament was automatically dropped. The series of calamities had badly impacted Dr. Burhanuddin's entire life. His gracefulness and credulousness, especially towards those who had benefited from his position as a chairman of the board of directors had tragically destroyed his career in politics (Ramlah, 1996, p. 231).

There is still no research related to the accusation of Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmi's complicity with President Sukarno in the conspiracy against the establishment of Malaysia in 1963. Only the causal history of the Malaysia-Indonesia confrontation, the bloody events, and the steps taken to resolve diplomatic relations between the two countries have been found to be researched. In the writings of Mohammad Rodzi (2001), he explained that the rift in the Malaysia-Indonesia diplomatic relations included aspects of economic, military, and political propaganda. In order not to prolong this confrontation, several reconciliation efforts were carried out to end the two countries' crisis, but it all failed. Throughout the rift between the Malaysia-Indonesia diplomatic relations that began on September 16, 1963, Indonesia launched an aggressive campaign to destroy Malaysia. This point is also acknowledged by Rohani (2007) and Sahul Hamid (2010). According to Rohani (2007), in the mid-1950s up until the confrontation between the two countries, Sukarno's political influence began to fall due to Indonesia's less stable political situation, and the crises in the country. Sahul Hamid explained

that Malaysia's bitter experience was facing the threat of the Indonesian army destroying the newly united country, including Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah. He explained that Malaysia then launched a program of propaganda and psychological warfare during the era of confrontation. Among the propaganda and psychological warfare carried out is making films, campaigns, and organizing meetings laced with elements of patriotism to spread nationalist propaganda. This propaganda and psychological warfare aimed to strengthen the people's confidence in the ruling government and create hatred toward the enemy (Sahul Hamid, 2017, p. 1).

Moreover, the study conducted by Mohd Noor Mat Yazid discussed Malaysia-Indonesia relations before and after 1965. He questioned why the year 1965 was a turning point in the relationship between the two countries. What was its impact on bilateral relations and regional stability? Mohd Noor (2016) explained that the period before 1965 was marked by conflict and hostility, but after 1965, peace and cooperation. He described the Malaysia-Indonesia confrontation through the Indonesian anti-Malaysia campaign slogan, '*Ganyang Malaysia*' ('Crush Malaysia'), which successfully orchestrated an unstable atmosphere in the Southeast Asian region. To overcome this conflict, the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was launched with the aim of regional peace and stability in Southeast Asia. The writing of Suhaini & Khairunnisa (2016) explicates the causal reasons and factors of conflict between the two countries after Malaya wanted to invite Singapore and two regions in Borneo to the formation of Malaysia. One of the major reasons was that Indonesia felt that their country was more significant than Malaya because it had gained independence from Dutch colonialism in 1945, while Malaya had only achieved independence in 1957. This superiority complex is also related to the Indonesian nationalists feeling humiliated because Malaysia peacefully and without bloodshed liberated its homeland. Therefore, this situation has given rise to ideological misunderstandings and contrasts that have affected the friendly relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia (Suhaini & Khairunnisa, 2016, p. 76).

Some of the writings of local Malaysians show that studies and reports involving Malaysian nationalist, Dr. Burhanuddin regarding the conspiracy between him and Sukarno to thwart the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia around 1963 to 1965, have not been found. Therefore, this study undertakes a new research angle and is an authentic writing contribution to the scope of Ma-

laysia-Indonesia diplomatic relations in terms of political conflict.

METHOD

This article is based on qualitative research from primary and secondary sources based on references from archives and libraries. Scholarly articles on the Malaysia-Indonesia confrontation and the political situation were also utilized, especially in newspapers and magazines from 1960 to 1966. Private letters (*Surat Persendirian* - SP) by Dr. Burhanuddin, Tunku Abdul Rahman and the political party's letters were also examined in the writing of this article such as "*Niat Khianat Indonesia Terhadap Malaysia*", and "*Buku catatan tulisan tangan semasa dalam tahanan ISA Dr. Burhanuddin - 'Hal tahanan'*". The writing of this article traces whether the allegations against him are true and what was Tunku Abdul Rahman's purpose towards him. The findings showed that the allegations against him were purely defamatory and politically motivated.

The discussion is based on the analysis of various sources, from personal letters and papers to studies based on archival research methods that analyze documents from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Negara Brunei Darussalam. This research uses materials and data from the National Archives of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the National Libraries of Malaysia and Indonesia. Among the materials obtained are official government records, colonial office (CO) files, parliamentary debate files, official government files (FO), and official government letters, for example, "*Surat Perdana Menteri Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Kepada Dr. Burhanuddin, bertarikh 23 Mac 1966*".

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF DR. BURHANUDDIN AL-HELMI

Dr. Burhanuddin al-Helmi's birth name was Burhanuddin bin Muhammad Nor. He was born on August 29, 1911, in Changkat Tualang Village, Mukim Kota Bharu, Taiping, the state of Perak. His father was Haji Muhammad Nor bin Kasim and his mother was known as Sharifah Zahrah binti Habib Osman. He was said to be of Malay-Arabic parentage, his paternal family was of Minangkabau descent and her maternal family was of Arabic descent (Muzammil, 2015, p. 8). Before arriving in Malaya, his father was actively involved in the fight against the Dutch in West Sumatra, Indonesia. His father then emigrated to Malaya and resided in Changkat Tualang Village, located in northern Perak. He was his parents' eldest child. His other sib-

lings were Abdul Halim, Bahrin, Sayuti, Takyah, Zaleha, Suffian, Sahar, and Noorbait. He was known to his family and fellow villagers as 'Borhan' or 'Yop'. During his tenure in politics, religious activities, and also as a certified practitioner of homeopathy, he was known to many as 'Pak Doktor' ('Mr. Doctor'), 'Doktor Politik' ('Doctor of Politics'), and 'Doktor Agama' ('Doctor of Religion') (Funston, 1973, p. 118).

Before he commenced his Malay primary education in Sungai Dera Village, Tanjung Malim, Perak in 1922, Dr. Burhanuddin was taught religious education by his father, serving as a religious teacher in their village. He completed his Malay primary education in Standard 5 after following his father's migration to several locations in Perak, including Behrang Ulu, Bakap, and Kota Bharu (Ramlah, 1996, p. 2). His brother, Noorbait, described him as a bright, intelligent, studious, and diligent man (Muzammil, 2015, p. 28). Being a studious and bright student, he was noticeably an avid reader of different fields of knowledge, including and not limited to religion, politics, philosophy, health, and medicine. Together with his younger sibling, Abdul Halim, they both received formal religious education for six months at a school, back in his father's homeland in West Sumatra, specifically in Sungai Jambu Village, the district of Batu Sangkar.

In 1922, Dr. Burhanuddin's religious education continued in yet another institution in Pisang Village in Jitra, Kedah, located in northern Malaysia and his period of studies in the said institution merely lasted for one month. This was so because of his urging desire to further his education in another more modernized institution. His choice was the Madrasah al-Mashor al-Islamiyyah (the al-Mashor al-Islamiyyah Religious School) in Pulau Pinang (Kamaruddin, 1980, p. 4). While he was studying in his newly chosen institution, he admired several great teachers for their political ideology and their personalities, including Sheikh Abu Bakar al-Rafie who was a principal of a religious school, Haji Arshad al-Bawayih who was an expert Arabic grammarian and a member of 'Kaum Muda' ('Young Faction'), as well as Ashiran Yaacob, an author and an advocate of the Malays' social, economic and political rights (Saliha, 1997, p. 23).

Dr. Burhanuddin furthered his education at the Islamic University of Aligarh, India in early 1934, focusing on philosophy and literature (Funston, 1973, p. 118). After having completed his tertiary education at the aforementioned university,

he returned to Malaya and instantaneously earned a position as a teacher of Arabic language at *Sekolah Arab al-Juned* (al-Juned Arabic School) in Singapore. Not long after that, Dr. Burhanuddin started acquiring in-depth knowledge in homeopathy medicine under the tutelage of Dr. Rajah who was based in Singapore to promote such therapeutic medicine (Muzammil, 2015, p. 31). He pursued a much higher professional certificate as a practitioner from Ismaeliah Medical College in Hyderabad, India. With the attained qualification, he successfully started his first clinic for homeopathy medicines in Johore Bahru, located in southern Malaysia, and another in Picitan Street, Singapore, both in 1937 (Rashidah, 1969).

He was a Malay nationalist, who did not compromise with the Western-educated pro-British fighters in his struggle for Malayan independence. Dr. Burhanuddin had his own goals and ambitions in his political struggles. His struggles brought about the idea of Islam and Malay nationalism. He was also the first Malay to be detained in Palestine in 1936 for being involved with Palestinian fighters protesting against the Jewish and British Zionist occupation of Palestine (*Parliamentary Debates*, 1960). His struggle in politics culminated when he was invited to lead an Islamic-oriented party, the *Parti Islam Sa-Tanah Melayu* (PAS) (Malayan Islamic Party) on December 26, 1956 (Admission Form Dr. Burhanuddin al - Helmy in PAS, 1956). He was elected as the elected representative of the Parliament of Besut from 1959-1964. His voice was heard in Parliament and other opposition groups such as Onn Jaafar and Ahmad Boestamam.

On the 25th of October 1969 at about 6:50 a.m., Dr. Burhanuddin demised at his residence in Taiping, Perak, by the side of his wife, Suri Binti Yahya (*Berita Harian*, 1969, October 26; *The Sunday Times*, 1969, October 26; *Harian Abadi*, 1969, November 8). It was reported that he had succumbed to asthma and kidney stone diseases (Referred from, Official Letter from Taiping Hospital, 1967; Death Certificate of Dr. Burhanuddin Bin Mohd Noor from Larut Matang Police Station, 1969). His demise occurred exactly one month after his release from political detention under the *Akta Keselamatan Dalam Negeri* 1960 (the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960). While undergoing imprisonment, he had to be admitted to Taiping Hospital more than just several times due to his ailing health.

Dr. Burhanuddin had begun acquiring the ideology of Islamic reformation ever since he was studying in *Madrasah al-Mashor al-Islamiyyah* (al-Mashor al-Islamiyyah Religious School) between

1927-1928 through his avid reading of highly intellectual materials related to the exposure of such ideology. His strongly rooted religious educational background has shaped him into a piously devoted Muslim, well-learned scholar, as well as a progressively active politician. He is known and admired locally and internationally as a religious scholar and nationalist who prioritized Islam in his quests and advocacies, including education, politics, administration, and socioeconomic. The struggles enabled him to become an Islamic reformist respected by the local community.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FORMATION OF MALAYSIA

The proposal for the formation of a new federation was broached by Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1963 to establish a secure and stable nation politically, economically, and socially. After Malaya's independence on August 31, 1957, The *Parti Perikatan* (Alliance Party), which was the ruling political party, discerned that the prevalence of political turmoils in neighboring countries may affect the stability of Malaya. Hence, as Malaya's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman proposed a merger that would include Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak, and the Sultanate of Brunei (Mackie, 1974, p. 317).

Besides intending to deter the influence and malevolence of communists in Southeast Asia, the formation of Malaysia was also intended to allow Sabah, Sarawak, the Sultanate of Brunei, and Singapore to gain earlier independence from Britain (Mackie, 1974, p. 317-323). In this case, Sabah and Sarawak are provisioned as dominion states while Singapore and the Sultanate of Brunei are protected under the aegis of Malaya. This merger encourages interstate economic and trade collaborations for the sake of the country's continuous development. This means more resourceful states may support other states which are less advantaged (Mackie, 1974, pp. 317-323). It would greatly benefit states such as Sabah and Sarawak, which were previously left far behind. In terms of inter-ethnic relationships, the rights of the indigenous groups would be very well protected, especially those in Sabah and Sarawak (Ongkili, 1985, p. 163). Should the merger only comprises Malaya and Singapore, the Malays might lose their privilege since mostly the non-Malays populated Singapore. In other words, if Singapore solely joins the merger with its Chinese-majority population, it might pose a threat to the rights of the Malays in Malaya (Milne & Mauzy, 1978, p. 28).

On the other hand, Brunei had chosen to re-

fuse Tunku Abdul Rahman's proposal to join the new federation after Kuala Lumpur failed to meet the terms submitted by Brunei, including the appointment of the Sultan of Brunei as the first *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* of the Federation of Malaysia (the King of the Federation of Malaysia) (FO371/169703 File, 1963; *Borneo Bulletin*, 1963, January 26). Singapore had decided to enter the federation until August 7, 1965, when it was expelled from the federation due to a series of ensuing conflicts, including internal conflicts between its politicians and Kuala Lumpur's rejection of Lee Kuan Yew's aspiration of becoming Malaysia's Prime Minister (Boyce, 1968, p. 31; Bravo, 2006, p. 168; Lee, 1998, pp. 599-614).

The Republic of Indonesia and the the Republic of Philippines both objected to the merger altogether. The Philippines' opposition to the merger was rooted in the claim of its then president, Diosdado Pangan Macapagal that Sabah belonged to his country. If the merger takes place, the claim over Sabah from Malaya would be even more complicated and almost impossible. Although a survey conducted by the Cobbold Commission determined that most of Sabah residents preferred joining the Federation of Malaysia, it was repudiated by President Macapagal and his government (*Report of the Commission of Enquiry*, North Borneo and Sarawak 1962). This resulted in the severance of political ties between Manila and Kuala Lumpur (*Philippines, Federation of Malaysia and Indonesia*, 1965, December 30, *Manila Accord*, 1963; *Manila Declaration*, 1963; *Joint Statement*, 1963).

The Republic of Indonesia, a country situated geographically the closest to Malaya had shown in tensed objection towards the formation of Malaysia through its president, Sukarno (Subritzky, 2000, p. 56-59). He had waged a military incursion against Malaysia that marked the commencement of the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation on October 20, 1963, with a slogan which read '*Ganyang Malaysia*' or '*Crush Malaysia*' (Subritzky, 2000, p. 41-55). President Sukarno stated that the confrontation was because the Malayan government had turned Indonesia around in the formation of Malaysia. Furthermore, the creation of Malaysia was believed to portend the failure of Sukarno's aspiration to establish a huge empire called the '*Indonesia Raya*' or '*the Greater Indonesia*' (Cheah, 2013, p. 11; pp. 130-132). Indonesia's objection was getting more in tensed when President Sukarno sent his military troops to invade the Sabah - Sarawak border in Borneo. Indonesia's military force was also spotted at the bay of Pontian, Johore located in the south of

Malaya which borders with Singapore (DO 169/519 File, "Letter from Singapore to outside office", no. 582, 1964). This made it more convenient for Indonesia to spy on the progress of the development of Malaya (Malaysia). Nonetheless, Malaya foiled Indonesia's military incursions with the help from the British, thus, failing Sukarno's violent protests (Nik Anuar, 1999). General Suharto finally ousted President Sukarno, then became the President of the Republic of Indonesia following a serious political crisis in 1965. Indonesia had then taken proactive measures to reconcile with Malaysia by re-establishing the political tie between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur which was severed on the September 16, 1963 (*The Malay Mail*, September 17, 1963; Subritzky, 2000) after Indonesia's minister of foreign affairs, Adam Malik, signed a peace treaty in Bangkok, Thailand to put an end to the confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia (FO 371/187565 File, 1966).

INDONESIA-MALAYSIA CONFRONTATION

The Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation was an intermittent war waged by Indonesia that lasted between 1962 and 1966, indicating their opposition towards the formation of Malaysia. President Sukarno believed that his desire to create the 'Indonesia Raya' or 'the Greater Indonesia' which would merge Indonesia and Malaya was disrupted by the declaration of forming Malaysia on September 16, 1963 (Subritzky, 2000, 56-57). Sukarno's idea bearded resemblance with Dr. Burhanuddin Al-Helmi's vision of creating the 'Melayu Raya' ('the Greater Malay') which witnessed a merger between countries in Southeast Asia, as well as Tunku Abdul Rahman's idea of forming Malaysia. In 1961, Borneo was divided into four administrations. Kalimantan, one of the provinces belonging to Indonesia, is located in South Borneo and neighbors Sabah and Sarawak. Close to the north of Kalimantan was the government of the Sultanate of Brunei and two provinces under the British shelter, namely Sarawak and North Borneo or Sabah (Subritzky, 2000, pp. 56-57). The British were trying to merge Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei, combining them with Malaya, thus forming the Federation of Malaysia (Easter, 2004; Jones, 2002; Subritzky, 2000, 56-57). President Sukarno was strongly against the formation of Malaysia. President Sukarno claimed the formation of Malaysia was a new form of colonialism known as 'neo-colonialism' and 'neo-imperialism', namely Malaya attempting to form an empire of its own (Means, 1963, p. 144; Gullick, 1967, pp. 47-49; Leifer, 1983). According to Leifer:

The Jakarta regime has often said, ad nauseum, that neo-colonialist Malaysia is a threat to Indonesia and that Malaysia was being formed (formed) to encircle Indonesia." (Leifer, 1983)

Additionally, President Sukarno believed that the formation of the Federation of Malaysia was a creation of the British which would further strengthen their influence on Malaya, empowering Borneo, thus, posing a severe threat to Indonesia (Leifer, 1983).

At the same time, the Philippines was also claiming their rights on Sabah, reasoning that the state had historical ties to the Philippines through the Sulu Sultanate and the Sulu archipelago. Political ties between Malaya, the Republic of Indonesia, and the Philippines were momentarily severed due to intensified opposition by Indonesia and the Philippines against the creation of Malaysia. A series of armed conflicts were witnessed. For instance, an anti-Indonesia riot broke out in Kuala Lumpur in September 1963 (*Antara News*, 1963, September 19). Other than that, Indonesian radical youths were seen taking part in anti-Malaysia demonstrations in front of Malaysia and British embassies protesting against the Federation of Malaysia (*Antara News*, 1963, September 19; *Asia Recorder*, 1963, November 5-11; Subritzky, 2000, pp. 56-57). On September 16, 1963, in Sarawak, approximately 60 guerrillas from Indonesia invaded border towns in Serikin and Tebedu (Easter, 2004; *Times*, 1963, September 20; *Indonesia Involvement in Eastern Malaysia*, 1965, pp. 47-74).

ANTI-MALAYSIA CONVICTIONS

While he was almost reaching the climactic point of his political struggles, Dr. Burhanuddin was again detained under the provision of the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960 on January 28, 1965. He was charged with several allegations, including conniving with President Sukarno to fail the formation of Malaysia and having an intention of forming a pro-Indonesia-government in Karachi, Pakistan (SP/18/8B/40 File, 1965; SP/185/8/64 File, 1964). Aside from these, he was alleged to be involved with the establishment of the 'National Front' to facilitate Indonesia in opposing against the Federation of Malaysia thus collaborating with Indonesia to impede the formation of Malaysia which was then just two years old ever since its inception on September 16, 1963. He was accused to have arranged secret meetings abroad with leaders from Indonesia to accomplish his goals. Dr. Burhanuddin was detained while he was at the helm of leadership in the PAS together with Dato' Raja Abu

Hanifah (the PAS member of the state of Negeri Sembilan), two members of the *Parti Buruh* (the Labour Party), namely Aziz Ishak and Ishak Haji Mohammad who was also known as Pak Sako, other than Hasnol Hadi (the President of Socialist Front) and Nazar Nong from the *Parti Rakyat Malaysia* (the Malaysian People's Party). Those aforementioned names were stated in a formal white-paper document entitled "A Plot Is Exposed" (SP/18/8B/40 File, 14; P/PEN (X) 1/593.1 File, 1965; A letter from Wan Mustapha Ali, 1965). These were all recorded in a document file pertaining to 'Niat Khianat Indonesia Terhadap Malaysia' ('Indonesia's Treachery Against Malaysia') (SP/185/8/64 File, 1964). The statement in Government White Paper's report 'A Plot Is Exposed' recorded the following statement:

The Indonesian official (official) told Abdul Aziz bin Ishak that while Dato' Raja Abu Hanifah was in Tokyo during the recent Olympics the latter-contacted (latter contacted) high Indonesian officials there and suggested that Indonesia should initiate the formation of a "Malayan" Government-in-Exile. The Indonesian official asked Abdul Aziz bin Ishak to remain longer in New Delhi because he had several issues to discuss with Abdul Aziz bin Ishak, who was also told that the Sukarno regime would be quite willing to finance a tour by him to any country he liked as long as he liked. Moreover, he would also be made a member of this Exile Government ...prior to leaving for Tokyo Dato' Raja Abu Hanifah discussed his secret mission with Dr. Burhanuddin and Ishak bin Mohamed who each gave (gave) him a letter of introduction giving him full mandate to discuss anti-Malaysia activities, particularly the formation of a Government-in-Exile, with R.M. Soenita in Malaysia but to proceed to Indonesia and remain there after his Tokyo mission. It would therefore seem that the conspirators had already conceived the idea of getting out of the country at this juncture." (SP/18/8B/40 File)

In his personal notebooks, Dr. Burhanuddin enumerated some reasons for his detainment, charges, and his aversive experience of being tormented. At the same time, he was penned in at Batu Gajah Detention Centre in the state of Perak. Presented below are the allegations of which he was informed:

- (a) *untuk sekian lamanya, seperti mana dalam pengetahuan anda, anda dengan konsistennya bertindak memudaratkan keselamatan Negara ini* (as it is known to you for so long, you have been jeopardizing the security of our country);
- (b) *anda dengan sengajanya dan dengan rela hatinya bersubahat dengan orang-orang yang*

menumpah kesetiaan mereka kepada Negara Indonesia dan bekerjasama dengan pegawai-pegawai perisikan Indonesia untuk menggulingkan kerajaan Malaysia yang dipilih berdasarkan Perlembagaan Negara melalui satu revolusi bersenjata (you have been intentionally and willingly conspiring with those who have vowed loyalty to Indonesia and plotting with Indonesia's high-ranked intelligent officers to overthrow The Malaysian government which was chosen according to the country's constitution through an armed revolution);

(c) *semenjak tahun 1963, anda telah menyebarkan propaganda anti-Malaysia dikalangan rakyat Negara ini dengan pandangan untuk mengalihkan kesetiaan mereka* (since 1963, you have been spreading anti-Malaysia propaganda among the citizens of this country with the thought of diverting their loyalty);

(d) *di akhir tahun 1964, anda terbabit dalam aktiviti-aktiviti di 'Front National', iaitu satu organisasi rahsia Indonesia dengan tujuan bagi menggulingkan kerajaan Malaysia yang dipilih berdasarkan Perlembagaan Negara melalui satu revolusi bersenjata* (at the end of 1964, you were involved with activities related to 'National Front', an Indonesia's secret organization aiming to overthrow The Malaysian government which was chosen according to the country's constitution through an armed revolution);

(e) *anda, sebagai salah seorang daripada pemimpin di 'Front National' yang telah membuat persediaan-persediaan selaras dengan arahan yang anda terima daripada pegawai-pegawai perisikan Indonesia untuk pergi ke Karachi, Pakistan dengan tujuan membincangkan pembentukan kerajaan dalam buangan* (as one of the leaders of 'Front National', you made preparations in line with orders you received from Indonesia's intelligent officers to go to Karachi, Pakistan for a discussion on establishing a government in exile). (Burhanuddin al-Helmy, 2006, pp. 23-34)

Through the aforementioned book, Dr. Burhanuddin refuted all the allegations and stated that he had no reason and intention to commit to anything destabilizing or jeopardizing the country's security. According to him:

I strongly object to all the allegations because they were not true. I had no intention and I did not commit anything prejudicial to the security of this country. (Burhanuddin, 1965)

He further averred that as a representative of the people appointed through the constitutional parliament and as a person who loves his country, a patriotic citizen, his loyalty to the country is very much part of him (SP/28/A/47 File, 1965). While he was obediently performing his duty as a representa-

tive among the opposition in the house of commons. He thought that the anti-Malaysia claim against him was too severe and would obliterate his political career. Dr. Burhanuddin also mentioned, if it was true that he had committed those wrongdoings, the Malaysian government should attest to those (Burhanuddin, 1965). In his opinion, if the Malaysian government fail to corroborate the charges with evidence, it was obvious that the charges bearded political sentiment and 'political vengeance' against him. The sentiment was apparent because of Dr. Burhanuddin's position as a parliamentarian from an opposition party and his outspokenness in deprecating any policy made by the government of Malaysia which was against the political pursuits of PAS and the virtues of Islam. Dr. Burhanuddin added that those criticisms leveled at the Malaysian government were done in accordance with the rights under the provision of the Federation Constitution of Malaya (Malaysia) and 'the Declaration of Human Rights' or 'the Declaration General Assembly of the United Nation 14 Dec. 1960' (Burhanuddin, 1965).

The assumption that he was an anti-Malaysian was due to his arguments in parliament constantly criticizing Tunku Abdul Rahman's government policy towards the merger of Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah. Nonetheless, Dr. Burhanuddin himself was ambitious about merging Malaya with its neighboring regions through an idea of his own, the '*Melayu Raya*' (the 'Greater Malay'). However, in his view, the idea of forming a nation as proposed by Tunku Abdul Rahman was different from the concept of unification of state formation Dr. Burhanuddin fought for during the British colonial era' (Dr. Burhanuddin, 1965, 27). He further stated that the idea was against the struggles of the people of Malaya and history of Malay civilization' (Burhanuddin, 1965). Dr. Burhanuddin feared the split among the Malays in the Malay world would have a huge impact on the unification of the nation' (Burhanuddin, 1965, p. 19). The merger will then upsets Indonesia and the Philippines which were demanding their rights over Sarawak and Sabah. This was so because each of them claimed that Sabah and Sarawak belonged to them. Moreover, He thought that the possible crisis may cause friendly relationships among countries of Malay origins to sever. Thus, his deprecation and expostulations did not show that he was an anti-Malaysia person, but they were delivered in the house of the commons in accordance with the provisions of the Federation Constitution' (Burhanuddin, 1965, p. 20). Even so, they were

misunderstood by the *Parti Perikatan* (Alliance Party) of the Malaysian government. A leader from PAS, Mohd Asri Hj Muda who was commenting on the detainment of Dr. Burhanuddin, perceived the detainment as a political strategy of the ruling party in view of Malaysia's General Election in 1964 (*Parliamentary Debates*, 1966, pp. 6716-6719). This was because Dr. Burhanuddin's outspokenness in deprecating the federal government's policies, his great influence as an opposition parliamentarian, and his Islamic-oriented political pursuits in PAS, negatively affected those pro-government politicians.

Aside from all charges mentioned earlier, Dr. Burhanuddin was alleged to have assisted Indonesia which was then in confrontation with Malaysia. He was also accused of pled with the slogan Sukarno '*Mengganyang Malaysia*' or 'Crushing Malaysia' to protest again the Federation of Malaysia. Those allegations were bolstered by another claim in which Dr. Burhanuddin had established a company in Sumatra to support his political activities. The Republic of Indonesian Embassy office in Kuala Lumpur was also accused of having encouraged opposition parties, especially PAS, to collaborate with the Indonesian government in opposing the formation of Malaysia and to become anti-government towards the governing party which was the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) (*Berita Harian*, 1964, 23 April). Such allegations without any evidence were enough to have Dr. Burhanuddin detained under Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960 and they spent almost five years of imprisonment without prosecution in Batu Gajah, Perak. This Act is related to preventive detention laws in Malaysia. This legislation was enacted after the Federation of Malaya gained independence from the British in 1957. Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960 allows for detention without any trial or criminal charges under criminal charges which are limited and legally defined (Appointment of Date of Coming into Operation, 2012).

After his early release from the detainment under Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960 due to his deteriorating health conditions and receiving medical treatment in Australia, he was prohibited by the Malaysian government from participating in politics. However, after the relationship between Malaysia and the Republic of Indonesia was restored, PAS requested the government to review the prohibition but the request was ignored. According to a report in the *Bulan Bintang* magazine, published by the Information Department of PAS headquarters:

In view of the peace treaty between the two countries, it is only befitting if the terms imposed on Dr. Burhanuddin are to be dismissed. Maintaining the terms tantamounts (tantamount) to keeping black marks on the “forehead” of the democracy and rule which run in accordance with legislations of this country. (Berita Harian, 1967, October 27)

During his imprisonment, Dr. Buharnuddin occupied his time with religious activities such as reciting The Qur'an and reading books related to history, politics, and philosophy. Nevertheless, he managed to have written his personal stories in an “exercise book” using a pencil, wherein he depicted the heartbreaking stories of his detainment and recorded all charges against him. In the time of his detention under the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960, his friend, Mohd Asri Haji Muda led the PAS temporarily. Dr. Burhanuddin was only the President of PAS ‘*de jure*’ (‘*de jure*’) (SP/28/A/47 File, 1965). In 1966, he was released unconditionally from his detainment (A letter from Tunku Abdul Rahman, Prime Minister of Malaysia to Dr. Burhanuddin, 1966), and his health condition was already deteriorating. Dr. Burhanuddin refused to sign the letter sent to him by Tunku Abdul Rahman considering his conviction that he had done no wrong to the country and the citizens, and he did not partake in the connivance to overthrow the government (SP/28/A/20 File, 1965). The history of the struggle and his accusations of conspiring with Sukarno to thwart the establishment of Malaysia through this article provides a new angle of research on Malaysia-Indonesia diplomatic relations that were affected around the 1960s. Before the occurrence of this situation, the relationship between these two countries was strong due to having a common history and kinship.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, political detention, imprisonment, as well as the accusation of being a rebel and traitor to the country are very much part of Dr. Burhanuddin's nationalist and political struggles. Before these, he was also convicted and imprisoned abroad, in Singapore and Palestine, to be exact (Muzammil, 2011, pp. 179-194). He was imprisoned in Palestine for the conviction of partaking in a rally against the British government in the said turbulent country. Similarly, he faced the same consequence in Singapore for launching a movement against justice rulings pertaining to disputes and guarding the religious faith of Natrah or Maria Huberdina Herdogh (Muzammil, 2015, p.

39; pp. 138, 254). Moreover, his family had to assuage the misery of the absence of an important member who was in a noble battle for the sake of his homeland and the people. He was perceived as an adversary and a traitor to the country whose political career should be abolished by the colonial and the ruling government.

The similarity between Dr. Burhanuddin's and President Sukarno's idea of merging islands in the Archipelago opportunity for the former's political rivals such as Tunku Abdul Rahman to dispute and obliterate his career in politics although he behaved dissimilarly from President Sukarno who deployed armed forces in his attempts to fail Malaysian government's efforts. He only lambasted the Formation of Malaysia in the federation parliament with evident vindication based on his logic. If this would be contemplated, those charges and allegations could be political movements aiming to hinder him from speaking against the Malaysian government either in the parliament or in the public considering his argument frequently sparked rage and anger among the people and members of the *Parti Perikatan* (Alliance Party). He had therefore paid a ‘high price’ when he was imprisoned. In other words, his arrest under the Internal Security Act (I.S.A.) 1960 completely obliterated his political career. Dr. Burhanuddin was a member of parliament for merely three years but continued his presidency of PAS until he died in 1969.

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