

## Domination, contestation, and accommodation: 54 Years of Sabah and Sarawak in Malaysia / Faisal S. Hazis

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### Abstrak

**ABSTRAK**

This article traces the major contestations that have taken place in Sabah and Sarawak throughout the 54 years of their independence. The two major areas of contestation are state power and local resources, pitting federal leaders against Sabah and Sarawaks elites. These contestations have forced the federal government to accommodate the local elites, thus ensuring the stability of Barisan Nasional (BN) rule in the East Malaysian states. However, Sabah and Sarawak elites are not homogeneous since they have different degrees of power, agendas, and aspirations. These differences have led to open feuds between the elites, resulting in the collapse of political parties and the formation of new political alignments. Over almost four decades, a great majority of the people in Sabah and Sarawak have acceded to BN rule. However, in the last decade there have been pockets of resistance against the authoritarian rule of BN and the local elites. This article argues that without accountability and a system of checks and balances, the demand for more autonomy by the increasingly vocal Sabah and Sarawak elites will benefit only them and not the general public.