

SECTION 1 - GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO MALAYA

To understand the events and personalities commemorated by Malayan stamps, it is important to have an understanding of some of the socio-political context in which they were issued.

1. The Political and Postal History of Malaysia since 1945.

With the surrender of Japan on 14 August 1945, and the subsequent arrival of British forces in September 1945, the **British Military Administration of Malaya** (BMA) began on 5 September 1945, covering all the Malay states and Singapore. In January 1946, proposals were announced for Singapore to become a separate Crown Colony and for the remainder of the British dependencies in Malaya to become a single country, the **Malayan Union**. These proposals were met with open hostility but the Malayan Union duly came into being on 1 April 1946, Singapore becoming a separate Colony from the same date. Opposition to this constitution focused opposition to British rule and forty-one Malay organisations came together on 11 May 1946 to form the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), which was to become the dominant political party of Malaya for the rest of the century. A British parliamentary delegation visited Malaya to meet the opposition and a further new constitution was developed. Rather than risk further trouble, Victory commemoratives and proposed Malayan Union definitive stamps were not issued and the BMA issue continued in use until new state 1948 Definitive Issues based on the pre-war Straits Settlements design became available in 1948-1951.

Despite opposition from the Sultan of Johore to any form of political union, the **Federation of Malaya** came into being on 1 February 1948 with the formation of a civil Federal government to administer the former Crown Colonies of Malacca and Penang, the former federated states of Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak and Selangor, and the protected or “unfederated” states of Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Trengganu. Following attacks by Communist terrorists, a state of emergency was declared in parts of Perak and Johore. The “**Emergency**” was extended to the whole of Malaya on 18 June 1948. In 1951, an Executive Council was formed, members of whom were given the role of Ministers with defined responsibilities. UMNO formed an Alliance with the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) and Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) political parties to ensure a clear victory (51 seats out of 52) in the first general election, held in 1955. This Alliance Party victory gave Malaya, by now internally self-governing, the united political front necessary to negotiate independence for Malaya from Britain. Representatives of the Alliance and Council of Rulers visited Britain in December 1956 and achieved a positive decision.

A ceremony to lower the Union Jack over the Selangor Club Field (now Merdeka Square) for the last time took place on 30 August 1957. Thus, on 31 August 1957, the independence (“Merdeka”) of the Federation was proclaimed by the Prime Minister, Tuanku Abdul Rahman in Stadium Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur and it became a full member of the British Commonwealth.

The Federation became a full member of the **Universal Postal Union** on 17 January 1958, taking over from its member states this function that is vital to the ability to transmit mail to and from other countries. The member states had been “colonial” members of the UPU as British colonies since 1 April 1877 (in the cases of Malacca and Penang), 1 April 1915 (Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak, Selangor), 1 January 1916 (Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis) or 1 July 1928 (Johore, Trengganu).

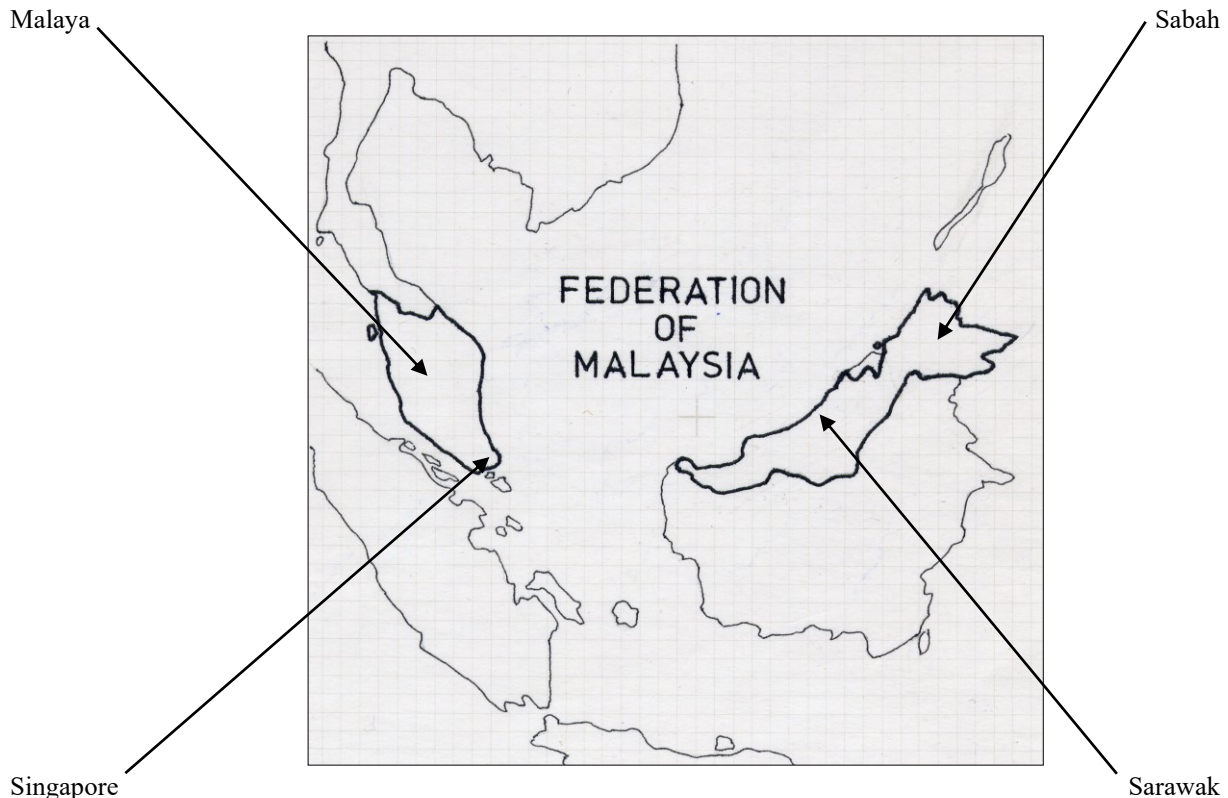
The early years of the Federation were dogged by trouble from Communist-backed terrorism. Although the “Emergency” officially ended on 31 July 1960, sporadic violence from guerrillas in the Thai border region continued (including some serious trouble in 1974) until the survivors accepted a long-offered amnesty in 1989.

The formation of the **Federation of Malaysia**, to absorb the former British colonies of Singapore, North Borneo (which was to take the historic name for the northern promontory of Borneo - Sabah) and Sarawak, was first proposed at a luncheon held by the Foreign Correspondents Association of South East Asia in Singapore on 27 May 1961 by Tunku Abdul Rahman because of fears that an independent Singapore (proposed for 1963) could result in Singapore becoming a base for radical elements (notably Chinese communists) which were still causing difficulties for the Federal administration. The inclusion of the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak was intended solely to balance out the Chinese dominance which merger with Singapore would otherwise have created. Tunku Abdul Rahman visited London in November 1961 to obtain political agreement to the proposal. To consult the people of what was to become East Malaysia, a Commission under Lord Cobbold with representatives of the British and Malayan Governments was set up and held hearings in February 1962. It reported in favour of Federation on 1 August 1962.

The target date for completion was set at 31 August 1963. The necessary treaty was signed in London on 8 July 1963, but there was a last-minute delay because of the political situation with Indonesia, which, amongst other things, claimed that the people of North Borneo and Sarawak were opposed to the formation of Malaysia, and because of the failure of Malaya and Singapore to come to agreement on the Constitution of the new country. The political leaders of Singapore, North Borneo and Sarawak agreed to force the hands of the UK and Malaya. On the scheduled date of 31 August 1963, first Sarawak unilaterally declared *de-facto* independence.

Then North Borneo announced the formation of the independent state of Sabah. Finally, Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew unilaterally declared the independence of Singapore. The leading politicians of both Malaya and the UK were both embarrassed and furious, and thus galvanised into action. Hurried negotiations were completed on 11 September. The United Nations announced on 14 September that the people of Sabah and Sarawak had come out in support of Malaysia.

Malaysia finally came into being on 16 September 1963, on which day Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore lost their claimed independence. Malaysia became a full member of the UPU on the same day (Singapore had been a colonial member since 1 April 1877, North Borneo 1 February 1891 and Sarawak 1 July 1897). Malaysia Day, however, continues to be celebrated on 31 August, the anniversary of Merdeka in 1957. Sabah and Sarawak formed “East Malaysia” whilst the remainder became known as “West Malaysia”. Malaya, Sarawak and Singapore continued to reprint their previous issues, but North Borneo stamps were overprinted “SABAH”.



Brunei declined to join the new Federation. Despite the declaration of the United Nations against their claims, the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines refused recognition of Malaysia and claimed ownership of the Borneo territories of Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak. This led to a war on Borneo from 1963 to 1965, the “Konfrontasi”, with Indonesian insurgents over control of these territories in which Malaysia and Brunei were supported by Australian, British and New Zealand forces. Indonesia even tried invading Peninsular Malaya, with a sea-borne landing at Pontian in Johor on 17 August 1964 and an airborne landing at Labis, also in Johor, two weeks later, as well as attacks on Singapore. Indonesia eventually conceded defeat.

Singapore was predominantly Chinese in culture and was an ill-fitting member of the Federation. Major disputes had broken out before Malaysia was formed and had been a factor in the delay in its formation. The original treaty grudgingly allowed Singapore a certain degree of autonomy under the central Government of the Federation in Kuala Lumpur. Following growing political and social unrest, the Prime Ministers of Malaysia and Singapore eventually agreed that Singapore could no longer remain part of Malaysia, but the two should continue to co-operate at national and international level. A public announcement giving the impression that Malaysia had expelled Singapore was made on the morning of 9 August 1965.

The capital of Sabah, Jesselton, was renamed Kota Kinabalu on 31 August 1963, with the declaration of independence. So far as its postmarks were concerned, the change was phased in as date stamps were renewed. The first Kota Kinabalu postmark was reported to have been introduced on 16 September 1963, but some Jesselton postmarks were still in use as late as 25 June 1968 and possibly later.

The original constitution of Malaysia continued to give dominance to the Malay race. This encouraged unrest among extremists of other races. This all came to a head in rioting on 13 May 1969. Parliament was suspended and a National Operation Council under Tun Haji Abdul Razak bin Hussein was charged with restoring national harmony. A National Consultative Council was formed in 1970 and a new Constitution was established which restored the balance between the races and addressed other long-standing grievances. A National Ideology (“Rukunegara”) and a New Economic Policy were established as the basis for future social, political and economic development.

The capital of the Federation of Malaya was Kuala Lumpur (widely known as “KL”), the capital of Selangor and of the pre-war Federated Malay States. Kuala Lumpur thus became the capital of the new Federation in 1963. It was, however, anomalous that the Federation capital should also be that of a Member State, so a new capital, Shah Alam, was adopted by Selangor and redeveloped to suit its status. Kuala Lumpur was established as an “independent” Federal Territory on 1 February 1974 and gained its own stamps on 30 April 1979. Meanwhile, East Malaysia became dissatisfied with this perceived West Malaysian bias and the island of Labuan was similarly split away from Sabah to become a second Federal Territory and the capital of East Malaysia, with effect from 16 April 1984, using the same stamps as Kuala Lumpur. Kuala Lumpur remains the capital city of Malaysia, but the Federal Government Administrative Centre moved south in 2000-2001 from Kuala Lumpur to a new city, Putrajaya, built in the heart of the “Multimedia Super Corridor” (MSC) which houses the new airport and new technology-based science and business parks. Putrajaya, which is named after Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, gained Federal Territory status with effect from 1 February 2001.

Malaysia in 2002 had a population of 23.7 million, of which 2.5 million lived in Kuala Lumpur. Malay Muslims accounted for 67% of the population, Chinese 25%, Indian 7%, other 1%.

2. Currency.

The coins and notes of Malaya after the Second World War were controlled by the Commissioners of Currency of Malaya and British Borneo. There were 100 cents in one Straits Dollar, which had been established in 1903. The Straits Dollar (which was one manifestation of the long-established British Trade Dollar) (\$1 = 100 cents) was tied to the Pound Sterling from 1906 (One Dollar = Two shillings and four pence - approximately equal to twelve decimal pence). From 1960 to 1964, new stamp designs (except the “New Sultan” derivatives of the current definitive series) carried “SEN” instead of “CENTS”, but the coins remained unchanged. The use of “s” as an abbreviation for “sen” led to problems due to confusion with “\$”.¹ Therefore, from 1964, the issue was avoided by the use of “¢” on most stamps, but “SEN” reappeared from time to time.

The Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) was founded on 26 January 1959 under the Central Bank of Malaysia Ordinance 1958 with the combined roles of currency issue and reserve safeguarding, government banker and financial adviser, promotion of monetary and financial stability, and influencing the credit situation to the Federation’s advantage. From 1965, the Malaysia and Singapore currencies diverged, the Malayan Dollar becoming the “Ringgit Malaysia” (RM1 = 100 sen).

BNM became the sole currency issuing authority in Malaysia on 12 June 1967, issuing new notes and coins to replace those of the Commissioners of Currency of Malaya and British Borneo in all then-current denominations except \$10,000 (1s., 5s., 10s., 20s., 50s. coins and \$1, \$5, \$10, \$50 and \$100 notes were issued on 12 June 1967, followed by \$1000 note on 2 September 1968 and \$1 coin in 1971). All notes to date have shown the portrait of the first King.

BNM took over supervision of finance companies in 1969, with the first merchant bank opening in 1970 and the separate Malaysian Stock Exchange replacing a joint one with Singapore in 1973. By 1979, there were 37 commercial banks, 33 finance houses, 4 discount houses, two stock exchanges and a number of miscellaneous institutions operating under BNM supervision.

A second series of banknotes was issued in 1982, \$20 and \$500 notes being added to the series.

Second series coins appeared in late 1989.

The symbol “\$” continued in use until 1992, from which date “RM” appeared on all new stamps. It began to appear on currency notes in 1996, when the third series appeared in 1996 (RM2, RM5, RM10, RM50, RM100, followed by RM1 in 2000 and a plastic RM5 in 2004 - \$500 and \$1000 notes were withdrawn).

From 2003 to 2005, the Ringgit was pegged to the USA Dollar at RM3.80 = US\$1.00, but it now floats, based on an undisclosed basket of currencies.

The \$1 coin was demonetised on 7 December 2005, having failed to gain popularity.

Issue of the fourth series banknotes began with the RM50 in 2008.

3. Language.

The National Language is Bahasa Malaysia. It is a new language, developed by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Department of Language and Astrology) during the 1970s, incorporating and formalising the former Malay language. The official written form of Bahasa Malaysia, the spelling system of which was agreed in 1972 jointly with Bahasa Indonesia², uses Roman characters with fixed phonetic equivalents, in place of the Jawi (Arabic) characters previously used as the official form of Malay. Prior to this agreement, the Romanised form of Malay was not fully formalised and spelling varied considerably, being an approximate phonetic rendering of the Malay sounds. This variation was reflected in all Malay references, including the names of personalities, the names of States and the names of towns. Wherever possible, in the interests of consistency, the later Bahasa forms have been used throughout this book, including for the names of Sultans, and differences may therefore appear between names used in the book and on the stamps.

4. Coat of Arms.

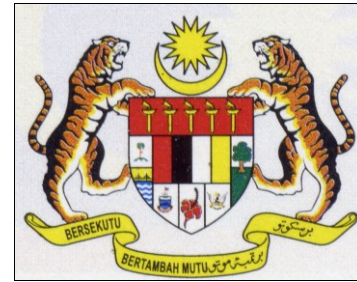
The coat of arms of the Federation of Malaya comprised a shield surmounted by the 11-pointed star representing the states of the Federation and the crescent of Islam. The top part of the shield had five keris signifying the unfederated states (Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis, Trengganu). The lower part of the shield was divided into three parts. The left-hand part showed the Prince of Wales' feathers above a rampart and waves (representing Penang). The right-hand part showed the Porta De Santiago (representing Malacca). Finally, the centre part is quartered black, white red and yellow representing the Federated Malay States (Negri Sembilan (yellow/red/black), Pahang (black/white), Perak (white/yellow/black), Selangor (red/yellow)). The shield was borne by two tigers. Beneath the shield was a Royal yellow scroll bearing the text "Unity is Strength" in Roman and Jawi script.



1957



1963



2007

The coat of arms of Malaysia was adapted from that of the Federation. The main changes were that the star now had 14 points, the motto was now in Malay (Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu) and the lower two sections of the shield were divided into six sections above three. Penang was at the left and Malacca at right. The upper row of four coloured rectangles represented the Federated Malay States. The lower centre showed the stars and crescent of Singapore with Sabah on its left and Sarawak on its right. The tigers had changed their grip on the shield. After Singapore left in 1965, the lower centre showed Hibiscus representing the Federal Territories with revised symbols for Sabah on the left and Sarawak on the right. The tigers had taken up a more aggressive posture.

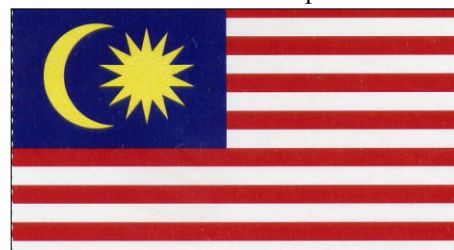
On 31 August 1973, to mark the tenth anniversary of independence, Sarawak was granted a new coat of arms, known as the "Sarawak Kenyalang Crest". This took the form of a spread hornbill. The hornbill carried a shield and a "SARAWAK" ribbon on its chest and a "HIDUP SELALU BERKHIDMAT" ("Live to serve") ribbon clasped in its claws. The shield showed the new Sarawak flag hanging vertically with a blue triangle at the top (the "fly" on the flag, next to the post), the apex splitting the lower part of the shield into white (left on shield, bottom on flag) and red (right top) halves. The Federal coat of arms was amended to substitute the new Sarawak arms for the hornbill's head.

Fifteen years later, on 31 August 1988, Sarawak readopted its old state colours in a redesigned flag. The new flag was yellow with black and red diagonal stripes. At the centre of the stripes was a nine-pointed star representing the administrative divisions. When hung correctly, one of the points of the star must point up the centre diagonal line of the flag. The shield on the Sarawak coat of arms was subsequently amended to match the flag.

5. Flag.

The flag of the Federation of Malaya was based on that of the United States of America and comprised the 11-pointed star representing the states of the Federation and the crescent of Islam on a blue canton at top left with the rest of the flag occupied by 11 horizontal red and white stripes representing the equality of the member states. The star and crescent are in yellow, the royal colour of the hereditary Malayan royal families.

The number of points on the star and the number of stripes were changed to 14 with the formation of Malaysia (13 states and the Federal Government). On 31 August 1997, the flag was officially named "Jalur Gemilang" (Splendid Stripe).



Each state, and each of the three Federal Territories, has its own flag.

6. State Names.

The Malay language and culture has undergone substantial changes since 1957. This has been reflected in the State names which have appeared on the stamps of Malaya. For consistency, the names in use on stamps on 1 July 1964 have been used throughout. Other names used are as follows:

Name used herein.	Other names found on stamps, postmarks, etc.	Current capital(s)
Federal Territory ³	Wilayah Persekutuan.	Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya ⁴ and Labuan
Johore	Johor, Johor Darul Takzim (Abode of Discipline)	Johor Bahru
Kedah	Kedah Darul Aman (Abode of Peace)	Alor Setar
Kelantan	Kelantan Darul Naim (Abode of the Star) ⁵	Kota Bahru
Malacca	Melaka Darul Azim (Abode of the Sublime)	Malacca
Negri Sembilan	Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus (Abode of Diversity).	Seremban
Pahang	Pahang Darul Makmur (Abode of Prosperity)	Kuantan
Penang	Pulau Pinang	Georgetown
Perak	Perak Darul Ridzuan (Abode of Grace)	Ipoh
Perlis	Perlis Indera Kayangan (Riches of Heaven)	Kangar
Sabah	North Borneo	Kota Kinabalu (formerly Jesselton)
Sarawak	Sarawak Bumi Kenyalang (Resilient Soil)	Kuching
Selangor	Selangor Darul Ehsan (Abode of Unity).	Shah Alam ⁶
Trengganu	Terengganu, Terengganu Darul Iman (Abode of Faith).	Kuala Trengganu

The names including “Darul” used by some West Malaysian states are said to be Arabic in origin and reflect the growing influence of Islam in Malaya. A “Negeri” (State) prefix to the state name should be used but this is usually omitted.

7. The Yang di-Pertuan Agung (Federal Supreme Head of State or King of Malaysia).

The supreme head of state, or “paramount ruler”, is the “Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agung” (“He who is acknowledged as the greatest lord”), or Yang di-Pertuan Agung for short⁷. He is frequently referred to officially as the “King of Malaysia”, so, for simplicity, this term is used in this book. He is elected by the Conference of Rulers from amongst the nine hereditary rulers to serve a five-year term of office. In theory, each eligible candidate is taken in turn until one achieves five votes. In practice, now that all the States’ rulers have had one turn in office, the intention is that future elections will follow the same sequence of states in a forty-five-year cycle.

The King had, under the 1957 Constitution, a special responsibility for safeguarding the privileged position of the Malay members of the population, but the 1969 Constitution sought a more balanced approach without a dominant role for any race. The King is, by virtue of his office, the Field Marshal of the Malaysian Armed Forces.

In most states, the Sultan is also the head of the Islamic religion. The King fulfils this role in Malacca, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak, and in the Federal Territories. This is the only function relating to his home state which the King retains during his term of office. All other state functions must be delegated to a Regent for this period.

As senior ruler, Sultan Sir Ibrahim of Johore was the logical candidate for first King, but his opposition to the creation of the Federation and his poor health disinclined him to stand as a candidate. The sequence to date has therefore been:

	Dates	Name	State
1	1957 - 1960	Tuanku Abdul Rahman.	Negri Sembilan.
2	1960	Tuanku Hisamuddin Alam Shah.	Selangor.
3	1960 - 1965	Tuanku Syed Putra.	Perlis
4	1965 - 1970	Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah.	Trengganu
5	1970 - 1975	Tengku Abdul Halim Mu’adzam Shah.	Kedah
6	1975 - 1979	Tengku Yahya Petra.	Kelantan
7	1979 - 1984	Tengku Ahmad Shah.	Pahang
8	1984 - 1989	Tengku Iskandar.	Johore
9	1989 - 1994	Tengku Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah.	Perak
10	1994 - 1999	Tengku Ja’afar.	Negri Sembilan
11	1999 - 2001	Tengku Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah.	Selangor
12	2001 - 2006	Tengku Syed Sirajuddin.	Perlis
13	2006 - 2011	Tengku Mizan Zainal.	Trengganu
14	2011 - 2016	Tengku Abdul Halim Mu’adzam Shah (second term).	Kedah
15	2016 - 2019	Tengku Muhammad V.	Kelantan
16	2019 - date	Tengku Abdullah Ri’ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah.	Pahang

In 1960, Sultan Tuanku Ibrahim of Johore died before he could officially take office and Sultan Tuanku Hisamuddin Alam Shah of Selangor took office but died before he could be formally installed. It could therefore be thought of as the year of the four Kings.

The King's consort has the status of Queen, with the title "Seri Paduka Baginda Raja Permaisuri Agung".

A deputy is elected "Timbalan Yang di-Pertuan Agung" by a similar process to serve as Deputy Head of State for the same period. The Timbalan has no direct powers but is required to stand in for the King when required due to overseas business or other incapacity exceeding fifteen days in duration (or a lesser period in emergency).

The regalia of the King, which appears on many stamps, includes two keris (swords). The **Kris Kerajaan**, later known as **Keris Panjang Diraja**, is the Keris of State. It is a gilded long sword, made for the inauguration of the Federation of Malaya from the steel of eleven kris, one donated by each state. It is used in the installation ceremony and symbolises power and authority. The hilt is shaped like the Tapak Kuda (horse's hoof) and decorated with a Jering fruit motif. The sheath is engraved with the Federal and eleven state crests.

The **Keris Pendek Diraja** is a short keris again made from the steel of older keris. It has an ivory hilt and sheath trimmed in gold. The hilt is called Hulu Perkakak and is shaped like the head of the legendary beast Garuda. The sheath is embossed with the Federation arms.

There are two identical maces (cokmar) with spherical fluted heads, and two sceptres. The **Chogan 'Alam** (originally translated as the Mace of Temporal Power, latterly as the Sceptre of the World) has a globe surmounted by a crescent and an eleven-pointed star and supported by four creatures. The **Chogan Ugama** (Mace of Spiritual Power, or Sceptre of Religion) has a goblet-shaped head surmounted by a crescent and five pointed star.

The royal headdress, or Dendam Tak Sudah, is based on that of Negri Sembilan, as the first King was from that state.

8. The Heads of State of the States.

Each state has as head of state either a "Ruler" (**Sultan** in the case of the hereditary rulers of Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Pahang, Perak, Selangor, Trengganu, **Raja** in the case of the hereditary ruler of Perlis, **Yang di-Pertuan Besar** in the case of the elected hereditary ruler of Negri Sembilan) or a "Governor" (**Yang di-Pertua Negeri**, in the case of Malacca, Penang, Sabah, Sarawak). The Rulers take seniority over the Governors, and, in each group, seniority is in the order of date of accession (and age in the case of a draw!).

The term "**Rajah Muda**" (or Crown Prince) is usually applied to the nominated successor during the incumbent's life time. If a head of state is elected Federal King, the Raja Muda usually becomes state **Regent** for the duration of his term of office. This also occurs if the head of state is abroad for an extended period.

In the case of Negri Sembilan, the nine states of this federation still have separate rulers, elected from within the royal family. There are four appointed "Royal Princes" (**Putera Yang** – Honorific: Tunku) of Besar Sri Menanti, Laxamana, Muda Serting and Panglima Besar, from whom the new Yang di-Pertua Besar is elected by the four "Ruling Chiefs" (**Undang Luak** – Honorific: Dato') of Sungai Ujong, Jelebu, Johol and Rembau respectively. The ninth hereditary ruler, Tengku Besar Tampin, does not have an electoral role.

Perak has three ruling families, descendents of the three sons of the 18th Sultan, which take strict turn to succeed to the throne by a formalised order of succession.

The heads of state of the various states during the period in question (excluding temporary regencies) were as follows:

State	Date	Head of State	
Johore	1895 - 1959	Sultan Sir Ibrahim.	(22 nd)
	1959 - 1981	Sultan Sir Ismail.	(23 rd)
	1981 - 2010	Sultan Iskandar.	(24 th)
	2010 - date	Sultan Ibrahim	(25 th)
Kedah	1943 - 1958	Sultan Sir Badli Shah.	(27 th)
	1958 - 2017	Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah.	(28 th)
	2017 -	Sultan Sallehuddin	(29 th)
Kelantan	1944 - 1960	Sultan Tengku Ibrahim.	(26 th)
	1960 - 1979	Sultan Tuanku Yahya Petra.	(27 th)
	1979 - 2010	Sultan Tuanku Ismail Petra.	(28 th)
	2010-date	Sultan Muhammad V.	(29 th)
Malacca	1957 - 1959	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Leong Yew Koh.	(1 st)
	1959 - 1971	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abdul Malek bin Yusof Dato Maha Kurnia.	(2 nd)
	1971 - 1975	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abdul Aziz bin Haj Abdul Majid.	(3 rd)
	1975 - 1984	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Syed Zahiruddin bin Syed Hassan.	(4 th)
	1984 - 2004	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Syed Ahmad Alhaj bin Syed Mahmud Shahabudin.	(5 th)
Negri Sembilan	2004 - date	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Mohd Khalil Yaakob.	(6 th)
	1933 - 1960	Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Abdul Rahman.	(2 nd)

State	Date	Head of State	
	1960 - 1967	Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Munawir.	(3 rd)
	1967 - 2008	Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Ja'afar.	(4 th)
	2008 - date	Yang di-Pertuan Besar Tuanku Muhriz.	(5 th)
Pahang	1932 - 1974	Sultan Sir Abu Bakar.	(4 th)
	1974 - 2019	Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah.	(5 th)
	2019 - date	Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah.	(6 th)
Penang	1957 - 1967	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Uda Al-Haj bin Raja Muhammad.	(1 st)
	1967 - 1969	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Syed Sheh bin Syed Abdullah Shahabudin.	(2 nd)
	1969 - 1975	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Syed Sheh Al-Haj bin Syed Hassan Barakbah.	(3 rd)
	1975 - 1981	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Sardon bin Haji Jubir.	(4 th)
	1981 - 1989	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Awang bin Hassan.	(5 th)
	1989 - 2001	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Hamdan bin Sheikh Tahir.	(6 th)
	2001 - date	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas.	(7 th)
Perak	1948 - 1963	Sultan Yussuf 'Izzuddin Shah	(32 nd)
	1963 - 1984	Sultan Idris Shah	(33 rd)
	1984 - 2014	Sultan Azlan Shah	(34 th)
	2014 - date	Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah	(35 th)
Perlis	1945 - 2000	Raja Tuanku Syed Putra	(6 th)
	2000 - date	Raja Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin	(7 th)
Sabah	1963 - 1965	Yang di-Pertua Negara Mustapha bin Datu Harun.	(1 st)
	1965 - 1973	Yang di-Pertua Negara Pengiran Ahmad Raffae.	(2 nd)
	1973 - 1975	Yang di-Pertua Negara Fuad Stephens.	(3 rd)
	1975 - 1978	Yang di-Pertua Negara ⁸ Mohd Hamdan (Datuk Indan Kari).	(4 th)
	1978 - 1979	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Ahmad Koroh.	(5 th)
	1979 - 1987	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Mohamad Adnan Robert.	(6 th)
	1987 - 1994	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Mohamad Said bin Keruak.	(7 th)
	1995 - 2002	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Sakaran bin Dandai.	(8 th)
	2003 - 2010	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Ahmadshah bin Abdullah.	(9 th)
	2011 - date	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Juhar bin Mahiruddin	(10 th)
Sarawak	1963 - 1969	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abang Haji Openg.	(1 st)
	1969 - 1977	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tuanku Bujang Tuanku Othman.	(2 nd)
	1977 - 1981	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abang Muhammad Salahuddin.	(3 rd)
	1981 - 1985	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abdul Rahman Ya'kub.	(4 th)
	1985 - 2000	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Ahmad Zaidi Adruce bin Mohammed Noor.	(5 th)
	2001 - 2014	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abang Muhammad Salahuddin.	(6 th)
	2014 - date	Yang di-Pertua Negeri Abdul Taib Mahmud.	(7 th)
Selangor	1938 - 1960	Sultan Tuanku Hisamuddin Alam Shah.	(7 th)
	1960 - 2001	Sultan Tuanku Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah.	(8 th)
	2001 - date	Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah.	(9 th)
Singapore	1959	Yang di-Pertuan Negara Sir William Goode (3 June to 3 December).	(1 st)
	1959 - 1965	Yang di-Pertuan Negara Yusof bin Ishak.	(2 nd)
Trengganu	1945 ⁹ - 1979	Sultan Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah	(14 th)
	1979 - 1998	Sultan Mahmud	(15 th)
	1998 - date	Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin	(16 th)

9. The Conference of Rulers.

The rulers of Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Kelantan, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Selangor and Trengganu are hereditary. The “**Conference of Rulers**” was originally established in 1897 as the “Council of Malay Rulers for the Federated Malay States” to provide a forum by which the native rulers of the Federated Malaya States could formally meet with the British FMS officials to discuss matters of mutual importance. The first meeting, known as the Durbar, was held on 13-17 July 1897 at the Istana Negara, Bukit Chandan, Kuala Kangsar, Perak.

When the Federation was formed, the Conference was expanded to include all the hereditary rulers and the Governors of the non-hereditary states. It is now held three times a year and is the supreme body in many national, constitutional and religious affairs, including election of the King.

10. Federal Parliament.

The first Federal Parliament was inaugurated on 12 February 1959 by the King. Originally, the Parliament had two Houses:

- the **Dewan Negara** (Senate) with 22 elected and 16 appointed members chosen by the King, and
- the **Dewan Rakyat** (House of Representatives) with initially 104 elected members who would be reduced to 100 members at subsequent elections.

Following the Constitution (Amendment) Act 1978, the membership of parliament became:

- Dewan Negara: 68 (of whom 40 are appointed by the King for distinguished public, social or professional service or to represent minority interests, and two each appointed by the Federal Territory and the Legislative Assemblies of the states);
- Dewan Rakyat: 180 (all are elected, except for the Speaker who may be a non-member). (Between 1983 and 1990, the figure was 177).

The Senators serve individual terms, but the Dewan Negara is not dissolved. The life of a Dewan Rakyat is five years or until dissolved by the King, after which there must be a General Election.

11. The Federal Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister is the effective head of government, appointed by the King from the dominant party in the Federal Parliament.

	Dates	Name
1	31 August 1957 - 22 September 1970	Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra
2	22 September 1970 - 14 January 1976	Tun Abdul Razak bin Dato' Hussein
3	15 January 1976 - 17 July 1981	Tun Hussein Onn
4	16 July 1981 - 31 October 2003	Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad.
5	31 October 2003 - 3 April 2009	Datuk Seri Abdullah bin Ahmad Badawi
6	3 April 2009 - 10 June 2018	Najib Tun Razak
7	10 June 2018 - 24 February 2020.	Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad.
8	1 March 2020 - 16 August 2021.	Muhyiddin Yassin.
9	21 August 2021 - date	Ismail Sabri Yaacob

12. State Parliaments.

Each state has its own written Constitution and a single chamber Legislative Assembly (Council Negara in the case of Sarawak), overseen by a Speaker elected from its members. The States have Ketua Menteri (Chief Minister - Malacca, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak) or Menteri Besar (Senior Minister - rest) as political head of the Executive Council or Cabinet. The Ruler or Governor is the legislative authority, advised by the parliament.

13. ASEAN.

In 1961, an "Association of South East Asia" (ASA) was formed by Philippines, Malaya and Thailand to assist cooperation between the countries of that region. Its immediate successor, the "Association of South East Asian Nations" (ASEAN), is referred to frequently on the stamps and postal stationery of Malaysia. Following the end of the 1963 to 1966 Borneo "Confrontation" between Malaysia (supported by the Commonwealth) and the forces of Indonesia and the Philippines, senior government officials met at Bangkok and Bangsaen from 5 to 8 August 1967.

ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 by the Bangkok Declaration with the following aims:

1. To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region;
2. To promote regional peace and stability through the respect for the rule of law and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
3. To promote economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative collaboration, and mutual assistance;
4. To provide training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
5. To collaborate for greater utilisation of agricultural and industrial resources, trade expansion, improvement of transport and communications, and raising living standards,
6. To promote South East Asian studies, and;
7. To work with existing international and regional bodies.

The founder members were Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, later joined by Brunei Darussalam (from 8 January 1984), Viet Nam (from 28 July 1995) and Burma, Cambodia and Laos (from July 1997).

In 1971, the ASEAN countries signed the Kuala Lumpur Declaration which expresses the determination of the members to work towards securing the recognition of, and respect for, South East Asia as a "Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers". The Association emblem is a symbolic sheaf of rice with a number of "stalks" signifying the number of members. Versions with five, six and ten "stalks" appear on stamps and postal stationery. Member States were encouraged to use the emblem on all aerogrammes but Malaysia has not done this on more recent issues.

A biennial regional stamp exhibition known as ASEANPEX is held periodically in one of the member states, organised in turn by the postal administrations of the member states. The first was organised by Malaysia in 1985.

The Bali Concord II of 2003 agreed to set up an “ASEAN Community” comprising the “ASEAN Economic Community”, the “ASEAN Security Community” and the “ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community”.

NOTES

- ¹ Department of Posts and Telecommunications, Kuching. Reported by Mr. S.D. Sissons in Sarawak Journal 99/116.
- ² Bahasa Indonesia differs from Bahasa Malaysia mainly in that the former uses many Dutch-derived words, whereas the latter uses many English-derived ones.
- ³ Not carried on stamps - the first issue carried only “Malaysia”.
- ⁴ Administration in West Malaysia is now centred on Putrajaya.
- ⁵ “Star” is an allusion to Islam, as in the Federal flag.
- ⁶ Previous capital was Kuala Lumpur (see text).
- ⁷ Courtesy prefix “D.Y.M.M.S.P.B.” is equivalent to “H.R.H.”.
- ⁸ The post was retitled “Yang di-Pertua Negeri” in 1976.
- ⁹ Due to post-war conditions, Sultan Ismail was not installed until 6 June 1949.