



**COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF LAW REFORM AGENCIES (CALRAS) CONFERENCE 2026
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**LAW REFORM IN MALAYSIA:
INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK, PRACTICE
AND CONSTITUTIONAL CONSIDERATION**

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PRESENTATION CONTENT:

1) MALAYSIA IN BRIEF

**2) LAW REVISION AND LAW REFORM DIVISION (LRRD),
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS (AGC): ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

3) LAW REFORM PRACTICES IN MALAYSIA

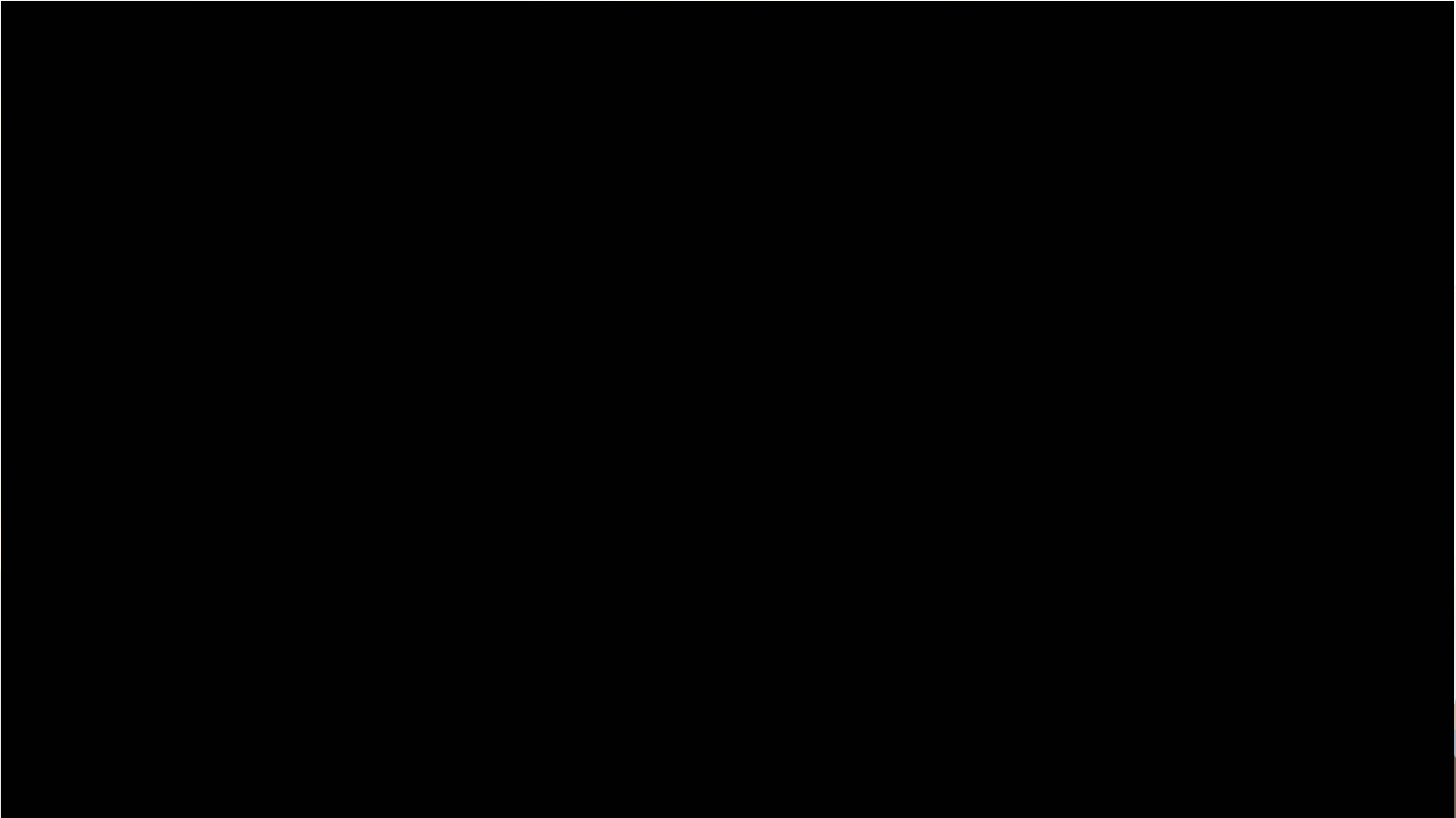
**4) KEY CHALLENGES IN LAW REFORM: FEDERAL-STATE
LEGISLATIVE DIVISION AND CONSTITUTIONAL
SAFEGUARDS FOR SABAH AND SARAWAK**



(1)

MALAYSIA IN BRIEF





HISTORICAL MILESTONES



31 August 1957 – Federation of Malaya attained independence

16 September 1963 – Formation of Malaysia (Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, Singapore*)

**Singapore separated from Malaysia in 1965*



SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

- Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy
- Federation of 13 States and 3 Federal Territories

POPULATION

Approximately 35 million (*DOSM, 2025*)

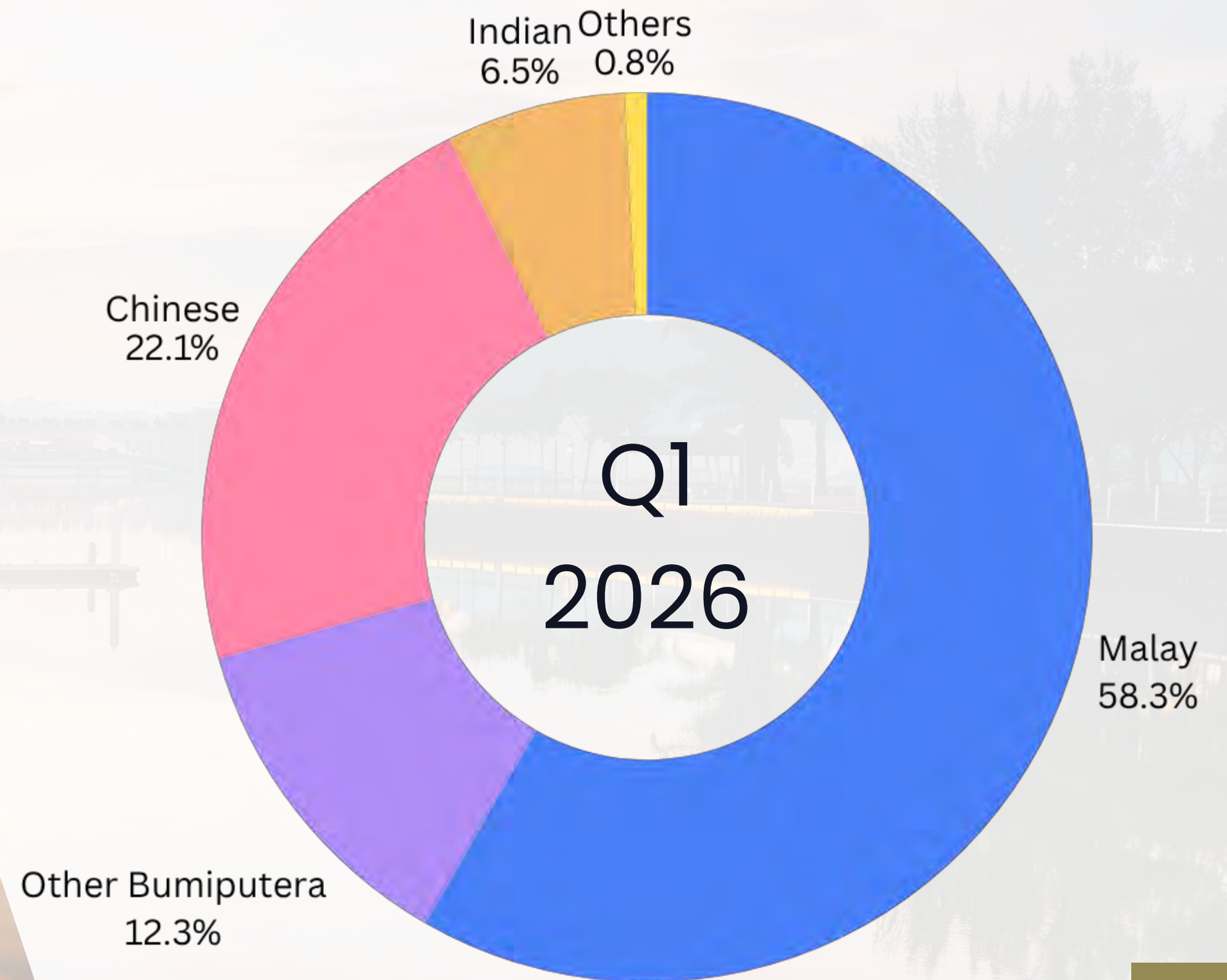
ECONOMY

Upper-middle-income economy with a GDP of approximately US\$445 billion (*World Bank, 2024*)



SOCIETY

- Multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multilingual society





CONSTITUTION

- Federal Constitution as the supreme law, establishing a federal system with legislative powers divided between the Federation and the States

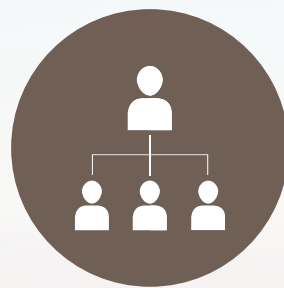
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**LAW REVISION AND LAW
REFORM DIVISION (LRRD),
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
CHAMBERS (AGC): ROLE AND
FUNCTIONS**



MANDATE

- Ensures Malaysia's laws remain current, accurate and responsive to contemporary needs
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STRUCTURE

- Commissioner of Law Revision and Law Reform
 - Two Deputy Commissioners
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LAW REVISION SECTION

- Revision and reprinting of laws under the Revision of Laws Act 1968 [Act 1]
 - Extension of federal laws to Sabah, Sarawak and the Federal Territories
 - Translation of pre-1969 English-language laws into the national language
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LAW REFORM SECTION

- Reviews legislation and recommends reforms
- Advises Ministries and Departments on law reform initiatives



(3)

LAW REFORM PRACTICES IN MALAYSIA



COLLABORATIVE GOVERNMENT APPROACH

- Ministries and Departments lead reforms within their respective portfolios
- LRRD reforms laws under AGC's purview and increasingly provides legal expertise across Government

TYPICAL LAW REFORM PROCESS

1) MANDATE & SCOPE

- Terms of Reference

2) REVIEW & ANALYSIS

- Legislative review
- Comparative research
- Reform papers
- Draft Bill (where appropriate)

3) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

- Ministries/Departments
- Relevant stakeholders

4) FINALISATION & APPROVAL

- Final Report
- Cabinet approval
- Parliamentary process
- Gazette

(4)

**KEY CHALLENGES IN LAW
REFORM: FEDERAL-STATE
LEGISLATIVE DIVISION AND
CONSTITUTIONAL
SAFEGUARDS FOR SABAH
AND SARAWAK**



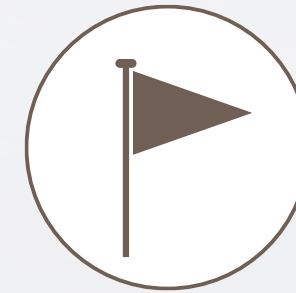
FEDERAL-STATE LEGISLATIVE DIVISION

- Part VI + Ninth Schedule
- Three (3) Legislative Lists



FEDERAL LIST

- Defence
- External affairs
- Finance
- Trade



STATE LIST

- Islamic law
- Land
- Agriculture
- Forestry



CONCURRENT LIST

- Social welfare
- Public health
- Town and country planning



LAW REFORM BEGINS WITH CONSTITUTIONAL COMPETENCE

SABAH AND SARAWAK CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS



Formation of Malaysia in 1963



Special constitutional arrangements



Malaysia Act 1963 introduced:

- List IIA – Supplement to State List for States of Sabah and Sarawak
- List IIIA – Supplement to Concurrent List for States of Sabah and Sarawak.



Wider legislative competence



Constitutional safeguards remain an essential feature of Malaysian federalism.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN LAW REFORM

Every proposal requires careful consideration of:



Constitutional competence



Federal-State legislative boundaries



Constitutional safeguards for Sabah and Sarawak



Consultation with relevant federal and State authorities



Outcome: Constitutionally sound, effective and practically implementable reforms

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Malaysia's approach to law reform is characterised by:

- A collaborative institutional framework
- A structured reform process
- Respect for the constitutional division of legislative powers
- Recognition of the constitutional safeguards for Sabah and Sarawak

Effective law reform is not only responsive to societal needs, it must also be constitutionally sound.

A city skyline at sunset, featuring the Petronas Towers and the Bank of China Tower. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The text 'THANK YOU' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

THANK YOU