

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MALAYSIA

Selected Issues



KHAIRIL AZMIN MOKHTAR

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**EDITOR
KHAIRILAZMIN MOKHTAR**

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

Basic Principles and Constitutional Legal Framework of Freedom of Information

Juriah

Introduction

Vision 2020 envisages that Malaysia becomes a fully developed democratic nation in terms of national unity and social-cohesion, economy, social justice, political stability, system of government, quality of life, social and spiritual values, national pride and confidence. To achieve this vision, freedom of information becomes a central factor for the government and the public in building a democratic nation in accordance with the spirit of Vision 2020. In this aspect, information becomes the oxygen of democracy whereby the people need information to participate in the affairs of society and in decision making process while the government need information and feedback from the society to ensure good governance.

History of Freedom of Information

Freedom of information is not a new concept. It was recognised by the United Nations since the 1st Session of the United Nation Assembly that took place on 14 Dec 1946 with the adoption of Resolution 59(1). The preamble of Resolution 59(1) clearly recognised freedom of information as “a fundamental human right and the touchstone of all the freedom to which the United Nation is consecrated”. The resolution called for international conference on Freedom of Information which was later held in Geneva in 1948. The main objective of the conference was to affirm freedom of information as a fundamental human right as echoed in the preamble of Resolution