

Religious Tolerance in Malaysia: Challenges and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia is widely recognized as a multicultural and multireligious country, enriched by a deep historical background and a long-standing tradition of coexistence among its diverse communities. Over the years, Malaysia has become an international model for religious harmony, where various faiths are practiced side by side in a generally peaceful environment. This paper explores the key factors that contribute to the promotion of religious tolerance in Malaysia, as well as highlights the ongoing issues and challenges that the religious community continues to face. The study identifies several critical drivers of religious tolerance, including the wisdom and inclusive policies of national leaders, the role of education in promoting understanding and acceptance, strong social and cultural traditions that encourage unity, the influence of religious leaders in guiding their followers toward peace, and personal experiences that shape individual perspectives on tolerance. Despite these positive elements, challenges still persist, particularly in relation to sensitive religious matters often fueled by ignorance, misinformation, and personal biases. To maintain and strengthen social harmony, it is essential to foster mutual respect, enhance interfaith dialogue, and promote inclusive education. These efforts can help ensure that Malaysia continues to thrive as a stable and harmonious society where all religious communities feel respected and valued.

Keywords: Religious Tolerance, Religious Harmony, Comparative Religion

