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Book provides insights into PM's thoughts on NEP

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's book, "The Way Forward," has shown that the model used by Malaysia has succeeded in bringing about political stability and racial unity, Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Abdul Razak said yesterday.

"We have shown the outside world that we can make Malaysia a successful country and provide a model different from that of other countries.

"Because of the success of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the current economic crisis was not viewed through the racial angle," Najib said when launching the book in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"The Way Forward" addresses the rationale and necessity for the NEP, as well as putting forth the future direction of Malaysia.

"The NEP is seen differently by different people. Whatever the views of others, to us, it has provided political and social stability and this has been tested through time.

"The NEP has fundamentally changed the preconceptions of Malays and others on Malays, especially in terms of their involvement in business as well as in the fields of education, medicine and technology.

"The NEP has shown that success need not be achieved through unbridled meritocracy, as this is not the only path for nation building. Rather it is the stress on meritocracy and excellence, tampered with social engineering that could provide a much more sustainable development in a multiracial society," Najib said.

The book is the Prime Minister's second monumental book, after the "Malay Dilemma". The book, published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson was launched in London by former British prime minister Baroness Thatcher early this month.

It is a collection of five essays of Dr Mahathir's views on the NEP from various perspectives.

Najib described Dr Mahathir as a "transformational leader", often regarded as the higher stage of leadership.

"A transformational leader has the ability to transform society and a nation to a greater plain.

"He (Dr Mahathir) is someone who has transformed the Malay mentality, the Malaysian mentality and the Asian mentality, resulting in successes of the Malays, the Malaysians and the Asians," he added.

Dr Mahathir, he said has played a pre-eminent role in presiding over Malaysia's success. "I would argue that there is no conclusion to be drawn for Dr Mahathir as his whole life has been devoted to Malaysia.

"The Way Forward" he said, not only encapsulates the thoughts of the Prime Minister but also the struggle and vision of a nation, which would like to achieve all the good things associated with prosperity.

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