

**Be like Dr M and walk the streets, ministers told**  
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A veteran newsman has urged the current crop of ministers to emulate Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who went on private walkabouts during his tenure as prime minister.

Apart from making them healthier, A Kadir Jasin said it would allow the ministers to better understand the people.

"Our ministers will be more aware of the life of the ordinary rakyat if they spend less time in their posh offices or being rushed around in escorted convoys and spend a bit more time on the ground," Kadir said in his blog posting.

The former New Straits Times Group editor-in-chief was commenting on the Federal Territories Ministry's ban on soup kitchens.

Kadir said he would support the ban if the government could ensure that every person – man, woman and child – now fed by the volunteers, are taken care of.

"To the government of Najib Abdul Razak, I say this: Those selfless NGOs, volunteers and donors came forward to help because the authorities had not done much to feed and assist these poor people.

"So now, if Najib and his ministers – the likes of Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor (Federal Territories) and Rohani Abdul Karim (Women, Family and Community Development) – are ready to take care of these downtrodden, the NGOs, the volunteers and the donors can move to do something else for the society," he added.

Kadir said Najib's 1Malaysia would be more meaningful if ministers walk their talk.

On the same note, he questioned why the ban specifically stated 2km away from Lot 10 as being off limits to the soup kitchens.

"What is so special about Lot 10 anyway? I hope it is not because it belongs to YTL Corporation, whose managing director, Francis Yeoh (right) had famously declared that he was not Mahathir's crony.

"I am sure other high-end property owners also do not like soup kitchens to be operating in the vicinity of their establishments. So why did the government single out Lot 10 for this preferred treatment?" he asked.

Kadir also pointed out that the issue of urban destitution should be seen within the larger

context of economic inequality, unemployment, poverty and the lack of a safety net for the poor and the destitute.

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