

Imperative social policies be well thought-out
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Informed readers will agree that the straight forward prescription of Marina Mahathir that policies must be well thought-out is a microcosm of what is seriously lacking in the Malaysian political system.

It would be tedious to try to identify the innumerable scenarios where the planning and implementation of development proposals and projects have been based, at best, on poor quality research, and at worst, simply by wishful thinking.

This is not the place to enter into a discourse on scientific social science methodology but it needs to be emphasised that social policies need to be well thought out for the basic reason that such policies concern human behaviour.

Because behaviour is complex- there being no such thing as a one factor causation- and because behaviour is constantly subject to social change therefore it is imperative that policies to be well thought through should be social science research-based.

Particularly in multi-cultural societies such as Malaysia, it is absolutely imperative that social policies be well thought through because vague policies and consequent incorrect strategies may well put different communities on a collision course.

It is being argued to be the case to some extent in the '1Malaysia' and NEM concepts

With respect, I suggest that qualified and experienced social science research-based teams be attached to federal and state planning agencies with immediate effect.

To minimise bureaucratic delays, they could be appointed on a three to five year contract.

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