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'Astonishing and insightful' letters to Singapore leaders

PUTRAJAYA: The second volume of Dr Mahathir's *Selected Letters to World Leaders* featured 73 letters to world leaders during his 22-year premiership. The first volume, published in 2008, became a bestseller and was reprinted nine times.

The new book highlighted the 1987-2003 period of Malaysian diplomacy and international relations, especially between Malaysia and Singapore.

There were correspondences between Dr Mahathir and three US presidents: George H. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush; three British prime ministers: Margaret Thatcher, John Major and Tony Blair; Pakistan leaders Pervez Musharraf and Benazir Bhutto, Iraqi

president Saddam Hussein, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, Fidel Castro of Cuba and Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

In his speech during the book launch at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here yesterday, Dr Mahathir revealed that writing letters was not a thing which he enjoyed doing.

"I am not a good letter writer and I hate writing letters. But, of course as a prime minister for such a long time, it would be unusual if I don't write letters to other people," he said.

The book's editor Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad said the letters between Dr Mahathir and his Singapore counterparts Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong were the most "astonishing and insightful".

