

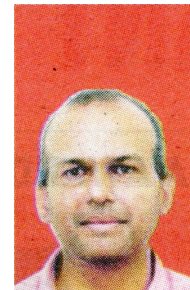


Russian President Vladimir Putin meeting with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the sidelines of the 33rd Asean Summit in Singapore last year, epa pic

RUSSIAN-MALAYSIAN TIES

'DR M, PUTIN SHARE A BOND'

Russian president holds him in very high esteem, says Putin's special aide



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RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

share a special bond.

Putin's special aide, Dr Victor Kladov, told the *New Straits Times* that Putin held Dr Mahathir in "very high esteem" in a bid to propel Malaysia as a great nation.

"I can confide in you this (based on) the body language and numerous meetings between the two leaders. In fact, I shared this notion with Dr Mahathir during my meeting with him in Putrajaya, just days ago before I returned.

"My meeting was followed up with (Russia's Security Council secretary) Nikolai Patrushev.