

**PM: Malaysian Way has proven effective**  
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KUANTAN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak says the country should be administered and developed the "Malaysian Way" based on unity and cooperation among the races.

He said the formula was proven effective in helping the country's fight against the communist threat and pulling through the Asian economic crisis in 1997, where many businessmen, including the Chinese, almost went bankrupt.

"The formula has brought us to our present condition and it will help us achieve developed nation status by 2020," he said at the Pahang Federation of Chinese Associations' dinner in conjunction with its 27th anniversary at Bukit Gambang Resort City near here last night.

Najib said the "Malaysian Way" was different from that of other countries as it stressed on forging unity in diversity rather than forcing the assimilation of the people from different ethnic backgrounds.

"The Chinese, for example, are allowed to retain their identity, religion, culture and education. That is why we are the only country outside China which has Chinese vernacular schools."

Najib said during his tenure as education minister, he had pushed for the abolishment of the provision which allowed the minister to change the status of vernacular schools.

"I managed to do it even though the previous education minister (Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim) did not dare to do so."

Najib also said the strong relations between Malaysia and China, which was initiated by his late father Tun Razak Hussein in 1974, had also made the republic as the country's main trading partner and enabled the construction of two sister industrial parks in Nanning, China, and in Gebeng near here, he added.

Last night's dinner also saw the swearing in of the association's new office-bearers led by its president, Tan Sri Pheng Yin Huah.

More than 3,000 members of various Chinese associations in the state attended the dinner.

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