

Why do they call me an intellectual?’
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by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

I AM always amused when people try to analyse my opinion and actions when I was Prime Minister.

I am not an intellectual but I admit that I use my brain more often than most.

I was one with the lowest result in my Senior Cambridge Examination to be admitted in the College of Medicine. There were seven Malays whose results were all very inferior to the other students. Apparently the British were practising affirmative action in 1947.

So much for being an intellectual.

It did not need a very intelligent person to notice that Malays were generally poor as compared to others in the state of Kedah in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, the years when I was growing up in Alor Star. They clearly faced a dilemma whether to get something of the wealth of their country for themselves or to just remain as they were. Hence the book "The Malay Dilemma".

It also did not need an intellectual to learn from successful people. The Japanese and the Koreans succeeded in developing their countries after the destruction wrought by war. Obviously if we want to develop Malaysia we should learn from these successful people.

Hence the Look East policy.

And finally, if you want to go somewhere you must determine the destination.

We want our country to develop.

The destination must obviously be the developed countries. The steps that have to be taken must be those which lead to the status of a developed country. Hence vision 2020.

I must admit that if I had no authority I would not be able to do anything to achieve these targets. It is not power. It is the authority accorded the Prime Minister which is not accorded to anyone else.

Without that authority one can dream. Many Malaysians may have dreamed but authority gave the opportunity to implement dreams.

I am not a complex person.

There is no mystery about what I did. If other PMs want to do what I did, they can. But if they have other agenda then they would attend to fulfilling their agenda.

It is as simple as that.

There really is no necessity to figure out the complexity of the thought process and the mystery of doing these simple things.

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