

DR MAHATHIR: Najib can tap wisdom of good doctor
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TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad's penchant for writing since his early years has played a major role in shaping his political thoughts and actions concerning the Malays.

Recalling what Francis Bacon once said: "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man" and putting it alongside Dr Mahathir's writings from the C.H.E.Det days in 1947 to a Doctor in the House in 2011, I may not be wrong in saying that in Dr Mahathir's case "writing makes for clearer and decisive political thoughts and actions".

Among his political works, two books stand out. In *The Malay Dilemma* (1970), Dr Mahathir reflected on what was wrong with the Malays following the race riots in Kuala Lumpur and other parts of the country soon after the 1969 general election.

Dr Mahathir offered several rationalisations for the May 13 incident that may not have been acceptable in some quarters in those days.

However, he was able to advance his thesis and a medically sound one on what ails the Malays. He called upon the Malays to move with the times in order to progress. He cited heredity and the environment as debilitating factors.

In *The Challenge* (1986), Dr Mahathir went a step further when he singled out a cultural reason to explain why the Malays would be left behind. This was the lackadaisical approach of the Malays to strike a balance between things "spiritual and secular".

As a way out, he crafted a long-term vision and a set of goals, Vision 2020, and challenged them to move forward with it. As prime minister for 22 years, he was able to direct his full energy towards efforts to realise this vision. To this day, despite his age, he is still prescribing solutions as a good doctor would, for national problems.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is fortunate to have a doctor on call in the political "house" as the country heads into the 13th General Election.

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