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Biography on Rafidah launched by Dr Siti Hasmah

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - A biography on Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, which gives an insight into the International Trade and Industry Minister as an individual, was launched today by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Written by Singaporean Zhou Mei, who has been Rafidah's personal friend since their days at Universiti Malaya, the title of the book, *Sans Malice*, was chosen by Zhou to reflect Rafidah's personality whom Zhou noted in the book's epilogue as a person who "harbours no ill will".

In a ceremony held at Holiday Villa, Subang Jaya, Dr Siti Hasmah, noted that there were many facets to Rafidah's character unknown to the public.

Among others, Dr Siti Hasmah recounted a humorous incident about Rafidah and her love of ice-cream. "In Tokyo, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto made sure she began her official courtesy call on him in his office with ice-cream," she said.

Dr Siti Hasmah said Rafidah was a role model for not just women and Malaysians, but for everyone.

"She is well known not only among Malaysians but also internationally for her forthrightness and her ability to stand tall among her counterparts."

In writing the book, Zhou conducted interviews with Rafidah's colleagues at the International Trade and Industry Ministry, family and friends.

Among others, the book includes a sketch on Rafidah done by the President of Uruguay Dr Julio Maria Sanguinetti last year when he led an Uruguay delegation to Malaysia.

The 132-page hardcover book costs RM49.90 and is distributed in Malaysia by STP Distributors (M) Sdn Bhd.

Speaking at a Press conference held after the launch, Rafidah said the book gave her feedback on the perception of people around her about herself.

Describing the book as "a synopsis of her as an individual", she hoped a more in-depth book examining her views on world issues would be written. She added that she was in the midst of writing her first book.

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