

31/05/1997

Making ripples with a collection of wit

Fadzil Ghazali

AFTER more than 30 years of writing various serious and official reports when he was a civil servant, Tan Sri Wong Kum Choon finally decided to come out of his shell and expose his sense of humour through his first book.

Under a title of "Ripples", the hard-covered book recorded the Malaysian Timber Council chief executive officer's wit and humorous view of various topics including politics, economy and philosophy.

Speaking to reporters after the launch of Ripples, Wong said his book contains the "witty" quotes he brewed up over the last five years, of which some were made when he was stuck in a traffic jam.

"It is a good time to be creative. Rather than aggravate ourselves through the frustrating experience of driving in a jam, one can make it pleasant and create quotes on many issues," he added. Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, who launched the book in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, said the book is good because it makes the readers think and dwell upon their weaknesses and things that motivate their actions.

"Ripples is a down to earth book that talks sense and can serve many purposes ... It is easy to read and is definitely entertaining," he added. Wong's maiden book is now available at major bookstores in the country. Retailed at RM49.50 a copy, proceeds from sale of Ripples will be donated to Malaysian Children Welfare Council and the Society for the Severely Handicapped.

Wong said the book caters everybody's taste and not only those in Malaysia.

He added that the "global" content of the book was achieved as some of the quotes were created based on his overseas experience when he followed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's trade visits abroad.

Wong has been the CEO of MTC since May 1993. He holds an Honours Degree in Economics from the Universiti Malaya, and a Master's Degree in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh in the US.

He had a long and illustrious career in the public sector since his graduation in 1959 when he joined the Malayan Civil Service, now known as the Administrative and Diplomatic Service.

Throughout his career in the public sector, he had served as Assistant State Secretary in the Pahang State Government, Head of Macro Planning of the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department, as deputy secretary general and later as the secretary general of the Primary Industries Ministry before retiring from public service in April 1993.

When asked why a book on quotes and not something heavier, Wong replied: "There is an element of time constraint when one is serving in the public service."

(END)