

26 JUN 1999

Shahnon-Book

"SHIT" AUTHOR PROMISES ANOTHER STINGER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26 (Bernama) -- Even before the controversy over his book "Shit" has subsided, novelist Datuk Shahnon Ahmad is already working on another book which he says will be more stinging than "Shit".

He said his latest work would also be a political satire, but in the form of short stories.

To be more precise, it would be a collection of the "shortest of short stories", he said.

The book, which will be published soon, would consist of 100 short stories on politics and political leaders in the country, he told reporters at the launching of political cartoonist Zunar's book "Kroni Mania" at the Galeria shopping complex here.

Shahnon said he chose the short-story concept because readers would not get bored with short stories.

Asked for a sneak preview of his upcoming book, he would only say "the book will be more stinging than Shit".

Shahnon was strongly criticised by various quarters, including writers and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, for using many vulgar words in Shit.

Asked why he resorted to profanities in his work, Shahnon said "without such words the book will be meaningless".

Shahnon said he wrote Shit not because he was angry with Dr Mahathir, but rather out of anger towards the culture in Umno which no longer had the guts to criticise its leaders.

According to him, Shit has officially sold 130,000 copies making it the biggest-selling book in the country's publishing history.

"That is only the official figure. I was told the number of pirated copies was higher than that. But I did not get any profit because the gainers are those behind the book piracy," he said.

Shahnon, who has resigned as a lecturer in Universiti Sains Malaysia effective next month following the controversy on the book, said he could now devote more time to writing books or appearing as guest speakers at talks.

-- BERNAMA

AU YBY