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Japanese version of Dr M's new book launched in Tokyo

Syed Nadzri in Tokyo

TOKYO, Thurs: The Japanese version of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's new book, "A New Deal For Asia", was launched here today with the publisher paying glowing tribute to the Prime Minister as a statesman of vision. Mr Shigero Tsugamura, the chairman of Tachibana Publishing Inc, said he is sure that Japanese readers will fully appreciate what Dr Mahathir has written.

The hardcover book, titled "Japan's Recovery, Asian Rebuilding", comes a week after its English version was launched in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir said here the book is written for Japanese audience as it has special relevance to them.

"What I said in the book is what I have always been saying," he told a press conference.

The book, which was launched in Malaysia on May 24 by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, looks at the financial and economic crisis which spread across the region from mid-1997.

It is significant that the Japanese version has followed so quickly because Japan has earned special mention in the chapters.

Tracing his early years, Dr Mahathir, among other things, wrote about inspiration from the Japanese - how they were able to defeat the British in Malaya at the start of the World War II and how disciplined the Japanese were.

"This somehow impressed upon me and later convinced me that with discipline, you can master almost anything," he wrote. "Thus, there was a new awakening amongst us that if we wanted to, we could be like the Japanese."

He described Japan as the driving force behind the Asian "economic miracle", through foreign direct investments.

Dr Mahathir also analyses Asian values and Japan's role in reviving Asia.

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