

'A New Deal for Asia' in Arabic

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Saudi editor impressed with PM's work

By Chow Kum Hor

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Stirred by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's thoughtful insight on the recent regional economic crisis, a reputable editor from Saudi Arabia has translated the Prime Minister's book **A New Deal for Asia** into Arabic.

Saudi Research and Publishing Co editor-in-chief Farouk M. Luqman said he felt there was a need to share Dr Mahathir's "frank and fearless" ideas with the Arabic world.

"I liked it very much because it was told by someone who has a good grasp of the economy and who was in the heart of the crisis," said the 67-year-old veteran journalist who is proficient in English, Arabic and Urdu.

As the economic crisis that hit Asia could also happen anywhere in the world, the book would serve as a guide for Arab countries to overcome future challenges, he said. Farouk added he was also impressed with how Malaysia could overcome the crisis without any assistance from the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.

Farouk, who took two months to complete the translation, presented the draft copy to Dr Mahathir at Putrajaya last Saturday.

Farouk, who writes a daily column for one of his company's Ara-

bic newspapers, said the book was presented to him by the Malaysian Consul-General in Jeddah Datuk Syed Hussien Al Habshee two months ago.

"After I finished the book, I told Syed Hussien that the book was very interesting and should be

translated into Arabic," he said in an interview.

He added the translation was not done with any intention to profit but out of the belief that the Arabic community could benefit by reading the book.

Published by Pelanduk Publications last year, the 155-page, seven-chapter **A New Deal for Asia** touches on Dr Mahathir's views on what caused the Asian economic crisis and ways to overcome it.

Pelanduk Publications is expected to print 10,000 copies of the Arabic version of the book, which is scheduled to be launched in Dubai in the middle of the year.

On his meeting with the Prime Minister, Farouk said he had asked Dr Mahathir how the country was performing following the crisis.

"Dr Mahathir said the country managed to overcome it without any foreign assistance or using its reserves," he added.

Syed Hussien, who was present during the meeting, said Dr Mahathir appeared impressed with Farouk's work.

"The Saudi Arabian Government has also given the green light to print and sell the book in the country," said Syed Hussien.

Farouk, who is on his fourth visit to the country, said he liked it very much and added that Malaysian! should be proud of their leaders.