

# Younger leaders still need Dr

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**T**HOUGH Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be without any formal political position after October, he will still be influential. The Diarist has seen him in five different roles — as a private medical practitioner, backbencher, Minister of Education, DPM and PM. The PM has talked often with him and both have always been surprised.

At each stage, Dr Mahathir was not a letdown. He has always been outspoken and perhaps in retirement he will provide new surprises.

He will be content to leave the future of Malaysia to Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. He does not want to be known as PM, but simply as Dr Mahathir.

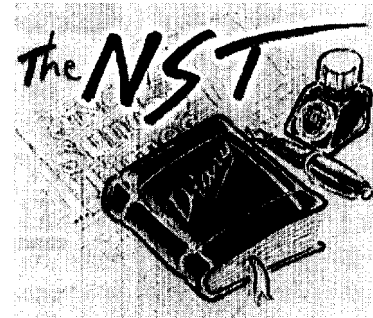
But he knows that every Malaysian remembers him even though no streets, schools, bridges, buildings, scholarships, airports and medals are named in his honour. Dr M likes to pretend he will be just Dr Mahathir. It won't be because his successor will make him a Tun, and the SMN (not SSM) at that.

The PM's achievements will not be surpassed for a long time. He is not likely to be a forgotten figure even among the notoriously short-memory Malaysians. Perhaps, for now at least, Malaysians of all races take for granted that their country is a multi-

racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural working democracy and Malaysia Inc. These will be Dr M's valuable legacies.

Abdullah has made scripted as well as impromptu remarks that Dr M is an act hard to follow for a hundred years and he and the younger leaders would continue to need Dr M's moral support. Be that as it may, Dr M, many believe in spite of him wanting to lead a quiet life, will still be drawn to the public stage. After all, he remains the most famous Malaysian alive.

Insiders say he has embarked (and



is progressing well) on writing his memoirs, and knowing him, he will write them himself, without being ghosted. It will be interesting to read of his 22 years of experience of power and his many years of powerlessness.

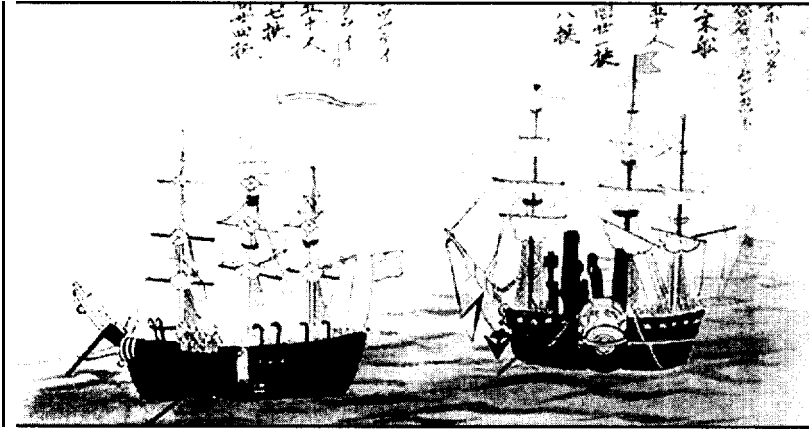
Meanwhile, Abdullah is relaxed and confident. He now even jokes easily and says everything is set as scheduled.

## Tokyo Beckons

IT was a huge delegation consisting of the well-known, little-known and aspiring Malaysians. Some people obviously pulled out all the stops to be included in the Deputy PM's entourage to Japan and it is not difficult to see why.

An observer wryly said: "There are perhaps billions of ringgit floating

# Mahathir's support



PERRY LEGACY: Divine wind (kamikaze) failed to disperse the foreign devils.

around in the main lobby of the Imperial Hotel (in Hibiya).”

Perhaps, this will be the largest number of Malaysian business people and their spouses gathered in Tokyo under one roof for some time.

An old-timer remarked: “It is well known that these business people were attempting to boost or profile themselves to the incoming leadership and those around it.

“I think it is fair to say that many of those present weren't keen supporters of Pak Lah before, but they are very pragmatic.”

It's early summer in Tokyo and it rained every day except yesterday. Hay

fever has never dampened the Diarist's enthusiasm for the lazy walks in several of the city's beautiful parks and gardens, but the downpour did.

That notwithstanding, it was good to be back in Tokyo after a long absence. What never ceases to amaze the Diarist is that it is so clean and well organised despite the teeming millions.

Edo (old name of Tokyo) has become a major First World metropolis and the most expensive place on earth 150 years after the arrival of Commodore Perry's blackships. The American presence utterly transformed the Japanese nation.

And it was the end of the Shoguns who had ruled Japan for two-and-a-half centuries.

## Wasted Talent

AT a party last week, the Diarist was taken aside by a prominent socialite who pointed out a scene and, unasked, delivered his verdict about a couple — A and E: “There's clearly no love lost there. A leaned across to put his hand on E's, and she instantly withdrew it.” She remains on top, as always.

A is an excellent hubby. He has a Rolls-Royce brain, but he is, the Diarist pities him, the only chap utterly incapable of making money out of his position, connections and politics.

## Shah And Caviar

IT was reported that the late Shah of Iran would cut the hand of anyone caught eating the Almas Caviar which comes from a fish at least 60 years old. It was the preserve of the Shah. Today, one kilo can cost about £12,000 (RM74,400).

Little wonder the Shah was much hated, toppled, disgraced and died in exile.

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■ [dkl@nstp.com.my](mailto:dkl@nstp.com.my)