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Compilation of Dr M's speeches on science

WHAT better way to recognise a legacy than to publish it for public record?

Universiti Sains Malaysia has undertaken the task of compiling former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speeches to put on record this statesman's passion for science and technology.

Entitled Mahathir on Science and Technology, the book comprises 20 seminal addresses related to science and technology by the former Prime Minister, including a few articles that he wrote for the media in the 1960s.

"Tun (Dr Mahathir) had inspired us all," says USM vice-chancellor Professor Datuk Dzul kifli Abdul Razak. "Much of his thoughts are anchored on science and technology and it's evident in the way he managed the country. He has contributed so much for the development of the nation and we want to highlight that. Hence, the special compilation of his works and keynote addresses."

Among the addresses noted in the book were delivered during the opening of the 10th session of the Islamic Summit Conference last year, the 11th annual meeting of the Asian Society for Cardiovascular Surgery (2003), the International Convention on Biotechnology (2002), the World Renewable Energy Congress (1999), the opening of the Seminar on Virtual Reality (1998) and the 1st Asian International Congress on Emergency Medicine (1997).

Trained as a medical doctor, Dr Mahathir's perspective on science and technology is clinical and compassionate. For him, science and technology must serve public interest, and this was clearly spelt out in one of the challenges outlined in his brainchild, the nation's blueprint, Vision 2020.

While there are many compilations and books written on Dr Mahathir in relation to politics and economy, this is rarely so when it comes to science and technology.

"Apart from fulfilling our academic obligations, it is also our hope that this compilation will in some ways help to fill in the gap on an equally important subject matter as a tribute to the former Prime Minister," Dzul kifli said in the preface of the book.

* The book was launched in conjunction with USM's 33rd convocation ceremony, as well as the 35th anniversary of the establishment of the university. It was also intended to mark and celebrate the conferment of an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science on Dr Mahathir.

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