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Book on Dr M's speeches given as memento

SOME 600 delegates from 16 countries attending the Global 2003 Smart Partnership Dialogue were given a book containing selected speeches of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on globalisation, smart partnership and government, Bernama reports.

The 269-page book was given as a memento to smart partners on the occasion of Dr Mahathir's retirement as Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir, who became Prime Minister on July 16 1981, steps down in October this year and will be succeeded by his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The book, edited by Datuk Hashim Makaruddin, the Special Officer to the Prime Minister, contains a collection of 34 speeches written and delivered in the 1990s and in 2001 and 2002.

Dr Mahathir has been a regular speaker on globalisation and smart partnership at both national and international forums and has been widely quoted on these subjects.

Even in his keynote address at the opening dinner at the dialogue here, the Prime Minister highlighted the disparity that globalisation could bring about between the rich and the poor which, if left unchecked, could bring about a war of global proportions between classes and transcending boundaries, which was already evident by the increasing incidence of terrorism globally.

Dr Mahathir is also quoted as saying in the preface that "while we must globalise, we certainly cannot just accept (it). We must put a human face to globalisation".

The 78-year-old Prime Minister is also of the opinion that smart partnership is intertwined with globalisation, whereby to enjoy the full benefits of globalisation, the economies of the world should shift their emphasis from purely competitive to include co-operative elements, namely the win-win philosophy which underlines the concept of smart partnership.

He also says today's global economic system is no longer a simple chain of one-way effects but a complex web of feedback relationships.

Dr Mahathir also advises governments to be well aware of the benefits and pitfalls of globalisation and to practise smart partnership.

"After all, the interest of the people must always remain paramount."

Hashim, a former editor with Bernama's Economic Service, says in the preface that Dr Mahathir's eloquence and unambiguous thoughts on the subject make this book not only interesting but will surely help readers to have a better understanding of globalisation and smart partnership.