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DPM launches book titled 'Mahathir: 22 Years, 22 Voices'

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today launched a coffee-table book on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad entitled "Mahathir: 22 Years, 22 Voices" at the Renaissance Hotel.

The book which pays tribute to "Malaysia's visionary", Dr Mahathir, as a politician who eventually went on to become the country's fourth Prime Minister.

The 188-page book, sold at RM188 each, would hit the market on the eve of Dr Mahathir's departure from office. It is produced by two publishing firms - Melewar Apex and JF Publishing - and it took one year to complete.

Through photography, the book traces the more than 20 years of Dr Mahathir's stewardship, which include the transformation of the economy.

A carefully selected collection of images, accompanied by concise text, the book also traces the evolution of a country's transformation from a producer of primary products to a leading regional powerhouse.

The book's editor Michael Bociurkiw, a freelance journalist who writes for among others, Forbes magazine, MSNBC.com and Asia Times, described the book as an "inspirational, candid, behind-the-scene" look at Dr Mahathir "as a politician growing into the role of Prime Minister".

Bociurkiw said the nine-chapter book is called "22 Years, 22 Voices" because it contains tributes to Dr Mahathir from 22 "people who know him well" including world leaders, corporate giants, members of the academia and other renowned personalities.

They include the Prime Minister's wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Cabinet Ministers and prominent Malaysian personalities, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

The foreword is penned by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Bociurkiw said Dr Siti Hasmah gave a poignant insight of Dr Mahathir as a husband, father and grandfather.

He added what was also unique about the book was that it would feature "some never before seen" photographs of Dr Mahathir from private collections.

The book also has an advisory board chaired by Tunku Abdullah Tuanku Abdul Rahman who is also the chairman of Melewar Group Berhad. New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd group editor-in-chief Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad is also a member of the board.