

Launched — book on Mahathir's early years

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — A book giving an insight into Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's early years, his career and thoughts was launched by Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Mohamed Zahir Ismail today.

The book, *Mahathir of Malaysia: Statesman and Leader*, is by British photo-journalist Robin Ashead.

The author writes on the influences in the Prime Minister's life that had made him what he is today.

Tan Sri Zahir, who went to school with Dr Mahathir in Alor Star, described the launching of the book as "most timely" as it comes just before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

He said the book was about a politician

13 OCT 1989
and inevitably, about politics. "But the author has not attempted to become involved in our affairs and merely recorded events that had caused comments in the world media," he said.

Tan Sri Zahir added that Mr Ashead was no stranger here, having served in Malaysia in the British army with the Gurkhas during the Emergency and the Confrontation.

"Mr Ashead has spent considerable time visiting places in Malaysia and met people from all walks of life," he said.

"It is his love for Malaysia and a desire to give something back to this country that he has attempted to write the book."

Mr Ashead, 55, lives in Berkshire in Southern England.