

Daim launches book of PM's early writings

27/6/1996

Handwritten notes in the left margin: "Daim launches book of PM's early writings" and "27/6/1996".

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — A book containing a compilation of articles by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the *Straits Times* and *Sunday Times* between 1947 and 1972 was launched today by the Economic Adviser to the Government, Tun Daim Zainuddin.

Entitled *The Early Years 1947-1972*, the book is published by Berita Publishing Sdn Bhd and provides an insight into the heart and mind of the Prime Minister when he was still a medical student writing on a diverse range of topics.

Speaking at the book's launch at *Balai Berita*, Daim said Dr Mahathir was willing and brave to voice his views on some matters which were considered taboo during those years.

He also discussed issues ranging from politics, education, language and culture to the position of the Malay Rulers, women and religion.

He said the Prime Minister had an in-depth perception of new issues affecting society. One could also notice the consistency in the views expressed by Dr Mahathir during that period and now, Daim said.

The political agenda of Dr Mahathir today was not much different from his writings then, added Daim.

Even then, Dr Mahathir discussed major complicated issues in a manner simple enough for the rakyat to understand.

"This is what differentiates an orator and a communicator. Dr Mahathir is a modern-day communicator who speaks not to show his intelligence but to share his information and

views with society," Daim said.

He also urged successful businessmen to share their experiences and knowledge through books.

By doing this, he added, the good points could be emulated by others while the bad experiences could serve as words of caution.

Also present were New Straits Press (Malaysia) Berhad managing director Mohd Noor Mutalib, *New Straits Times* Group Editor Datuk A. Kadir Jasin and *Berita Harian* Group Editor Datuk Ahmad Nazri Abdullah.

Others included Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, Land and Co-operative Development Deputy Minister Dr Goh Cheng Teik, Deputy Health Minister Datuk Siti Zaharah Sulaiman, Information Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Mohd Shafie Apdal and Parliamentary Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Muhammad Abdullah.

Daim said the book provided readers an insight into Dr Mahathir's early views which had clearly influenced his thinking and actions when he became Prime Minister.

"Many of the articles, which were written when he was still in university and during the transition period between medical practice and full-time politics, showed Dr Mahathir viewed the struggle as an important component of his life.

"Whether as a university student, government medical officer or private doc-

tor, Dr Mahathir sees struggles as something which cannot be ignored," he said.

Daim hoped the interest and tendency to write among Malaysians would grow in tandem with the country's rapid economic development.

He said it was time writers wrote not merely for the sake of earning a living or financial reward but because of issues that needed to be written for the benefit of society.

Earlier, Kadir, who compiled the book, said Berita Publishing extracted the articles from the National Archives and published them for public knowledge.

He said Dr Mahathir was surprised when the idea to publish the book was proposed to him since he had forgotten that he had written many articles in his early days.

This included his reactions to issues on the Malay Rulers and the *rakyat* as well as the popular dance, *ronggeng*.

Kadir said Dr Mahathir's provocative and diligent writing had prompted ST editors in Singapore to ask him to become a full-time writer.

"It is our hope that this compilation provides others with a window to look at Dr Mahathir's early views on various issues," he said.

The book is sold at RM49.95 in Peninsular Malaysia and RM54 in Sabah and Sarawak. Orders can be made through Berita Publishing, 22, Jalan Liku, P.O. Box 1187 Pantai Baru, 59206 Kuala Lumpur. For more details, call tel: 03-2822754.