

**Wain ho hum about authoring book on Najib
Malaysiakini.com
June 26, 2010**

Barry Wain, the author of the controversial book on Malaysia's fourth Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad does not find the current occupant of the seat appealing enough to put pen to paper.

Wain, in Penang today to promote his book "Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in turbulent times", said he was not planning to write or research on Najib Razak as he pales in comparison with Mahathir, who ruled the country for 22 years.

In fact, added Wain, no Malaysian politician could quite come up to Mahathir's standards as the former premier was focused on his vision and "had an idea about everything".

barry wain in penang with liew chin tong "Najib, on the other hand, merely drifted into politics due to his family obligation; up to now it is difficult to associate the man with what he feels about the country," said Wain (left), when asked to compare the two Malaysian leaders, during his talk organised by the Penang-based think-tank Socio-Economic Research Institute.

"It is very hard to identify Najib with what he stands for; there is no single idea that can identify him, for example, we have no idea what he is passionate about," added Wain, 65, who is currently the writer-in-residence at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

However, Wain later reiterated that if he ever wrote a book about another Malaysian politician, it would be PKR supremo and Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, if he becomes prime minister.

Anwar a more interesting subject

barry wain in penang book signing "I know many are critical about him (Anwar) due to the changes he has gone through in his political career, but I find he has many interesting stories to offer, especially his varied experiences in politics," Wain told Malayskini, during his book signing session, attended by about 80 participants at the Wawasan Open University.

The 313-page book, which Malaysian authorities released after five months of dithering over whether to slap a ban on the work, is considered "highly critical" about Mahathir's career, which ended abruptly when he resigned in 2003.

It was withheld for allegedly "insulting the national leadership and the institution of the Malay rulers".

Wain had offered several contentious claims in his book, among them that Mahathir had squandered roughly RM100 billion through several financial scandals during his long premiership.

One such scandal was the case of Perwaja Steel, which Mahathir was quoted in the book as stating losses involved "maybe RM1 billion or RM2 billion", instead of RM15 billion to RM20 billion as estimated by others.

bukit gantang by election mahathir ceramah and luncheon 060409 04 Mahathir (left) had

denied many of Wain's claims and was very displeased with the book.

He had initially threatened to take the author to court and had lamented that he was misled by Wain during the course of three interviews.

Meanwhile, Wain on Najib's leadership style said he probably believed in his proposed reforms, the kind he himself had talked about but the premier, who is also Umno chairperson, is "up against reality".

"He does what is possible, for example, improving relationship with Singapore and the United States," said the former editor of the Asian Wall Street Journal.

"When it comes to the country's economy, what he really needs to do is to combat corruption, but he has not really done that," added Wain, a seasoned journalist, who had followed Mahathir's political career since the 1970s.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/135659>