

**Dr M not anti-Jews, say seminar speakers**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**July 20, 2010**

Speakers at a seminar disputed that Dr Mahathir Mohamad was anti-Jewish, despite his former vocal criticism against the Zionist regime.

NONE Ong Kian Ming, a political analyst from UCSI University, said that the former PM was not anti-Semitic because he actually interacted with Jewish people.

"My previous tutor, Donald Horowitz, said he used to chat with Dr Mahathir when he visited Harvard where he got a lot of his ideas," Ong (left) said during a question-and-answer session.

Former group chief editor of New Straits Time Press Bhd A Kadir Jasin expanded on this assertion by saying that Mahathir made anti-Jewish remarks in order to "get America to listen".

"He (Mahathir) 'picked on' the Jews to attract the attention of American lawmakers."

The crowd numbering about 60 saw Universiti Teknologi Petronas lecturer Ahmad Murad Merican give a presentation, describing Mahathir as a "student of the West", based on Mahathir's writings from 1947 to 2003.

NONEMurad (right) talked about a young Mahathir's encounter with "Occidental" or western culture in Singapore and his admiration for the Japanese.

"As a student at the University of Malaya in Singapore, he was awed by the hustle and bustle of cosmopolitan Singapore which was a long way from his hometown in Kedah."

"Sometimes we look east to actually look west. Japan is situated in Asia but has a very Western mindset."

Flashy silk suits

When the topic of Mahathir and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's different choice of clothes arose, Kadir called the former a "Melayu Lama" and the latter, with his flashy silk suits, a "Melayu Baru".

Today also marked the 63rd anniversary that Mahathir's first article entitled 'Malay Women Make Their Own Free Time' which was published in The Straits Times.

The article, that had an anti-colonial theme, is also available in the book 'The Early Years, 1947-1972 by Mahathir Mohamad'.

The seminar was organised by the Perdana Leadership Foundation(PLF) at its headquarters in Putrajaya this morning.

PLF is a non-profit organisation established in 2003 which is dedicated to appreciating the past prime ministers' contributions by preserving relevant historical material.

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