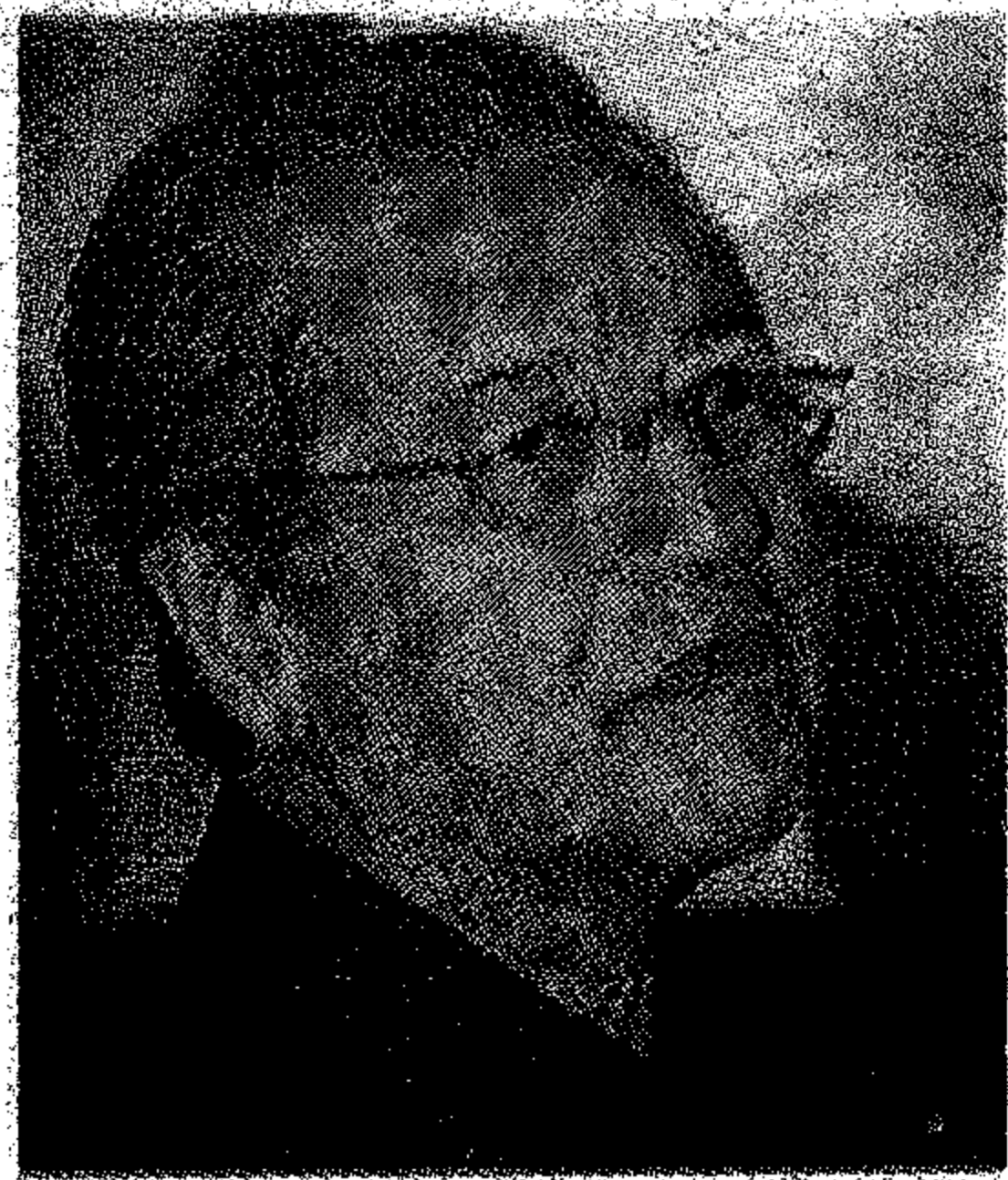


NEW STRAITS TIMES

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PM makes way for Dr M to share thoughts

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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad appreciates Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's congratulations

LANGKAWI: If there is one thing pleasing to the leaders and delegates attending the Langkawi International Dialogue (LID), it is Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's magnanimous disposition.

Yesterday, despite being invited by Swaziland's King Mswati III to speak, Abdullah passed the opportunity to allow his predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to explain his ideas on eradicating poverty.

The gesture not only caught the

delegates by surprise but also sent reporters scurrying to where Dr Mahathir was seated. And Abdullah did this despite Dr Mahathir being critical of certain government policies.

Abdullah's big-heartedness was evident from day one at the opening of LID last Sunday when he asked the audience to join him in congratulating Dr Mahathir and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, on their 51st wedding anniversary that day.

There was loud applause by the

audience, including 10 heads of state and government, with Dr Mahathir later saying he appreciated Abdullah's congratulations.

Abdullah told the 500-strong audience that the couple had contributed not only to the nation, but also to the LID.

When given the opportunity to speak, Dr Mahathir hit out at the West, for not compensating poor countries for the brain drain to rich countries. — Bernama