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NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

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A journalist with The Straits Times?

IF HISTORY had turned *out* differently, former premier Mahathir Mohamad may well have been a journalist. In his memoirs, he wrote about how he was offered a job with The Straits Times in the 1940's but declined.

He was then a medical student in Singapore, and had a monthly allowance

of just \$25. He earned a side income of \$50 from writing for The Straits Times and The Sunday Times.

The most he earned for an article was \$40. "Most of my articles were about the problems of the Malays, and had titles like 'Malay padi farmers need help', 'Plight of the fisher folk' and 'New-thoughts on nationality'," he wrote.

He said Mr Allington Kennard, then The Straits Times associate editor, offered him a job as a full-time journalist. At that time, the newspaper had very few Malay journalists.

But he politely declined.

"Getting a degree and thereby developing my political career was much too important to me," he said.

He said his columns appeared regularly in The Sunday Times under the **pseudonym C.H.E. Det. Det was his family nickname, and he masked his identity by separating the letters in Che, which was short for Inche or Mr.**

Tun Dr Mahathir still uses Che Det as the name of his popular blog.

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