

Memoirs flying off the shelves
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KUALA LUMPUR: MPH Group Publishing Sdn Bhd, the publisher of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's memoirs, *A Doctor In The House: The Memoirs of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad*, is in talks with online retailer Amazon.com to make the book accessible to international buyers.

According to the company's general manager, Ivy Tan, the book is selling like hot cakes.

On its very first day of sale, an estimated 5,000 copies of the book were sold, 500 of them through MPH Online.

At the moment, the book can be bought only at major bookstores across the nation and in Singapore, as well as through MPH Online at the retail price of RM100.

"Selling 5,000 copies of a book on its first day of sale is very good. It's our biggest publication to date," Tan said.

"Our initial target was to sell 50,000 copies in the first month but it looks like we have exceeded it, as bookstores are already asking for more copies."

"We will have more than 10,000 copies printed starting tomorrow. These should reach bookshelves by early next month.

"We hope to sell more than 100,000 copies in the next three months."

Dr Mahathir's long-awaited memoirs have garnered interest from readers around the world, as orders from the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan have been made through MPH Online.

MPH Group Publishing is also looking into getting the book into bookstores in Thailand and Hong Kong.

The book is being translated into Malay and Chinese.

There have also been requests to have the memoirs translated into other languages, such as Arabic, Albanian and Bosnian.

While it is still early to get a final verdict on the 843-page book from readers, many have been looking forward to reading it.

Universiti Teknologi Mara communication and media studies senior lecturer Mohd Amirul Akhbar said he had not read through the book yet but had read excerpts in newspapers and blogs.

"Malaysians should read and own the book to see Malaysia through the eyes of the leader who did much to transform this country from a little-known agricultural nation into an industrial powerhouse and a top trading nation in the world," he said.

"It is a masterpiece for Malaysian readers and they will get to see Malaysia through the eyes of the man who became this country's longest-serving prime minister."

According to Stephanie Ambrose, 24, a sub-editor, the book was not just about Dr Mahathir, but also a good resource book on Malaysia.

She was at the book launch yesterday.

"Dr Mahathir's autobiography should be read by all Malaysians because it is an enjoyable book."

Abdul Mutalib Saifuddin, 22, said: "Dr Mahathir has never been a stranger to controversy, so I'm sure in the book, he will address issues of interest to the public.

"Other political leaders have also written their recollections after retirement, including former Singapore prime minister Lee Kuan Yew's autobiography, *The Singapore Story*.

"I don't see why Dr Mahathir shouldn't have his say," he said.

"Biased or not, it's his point of view and it's up to readers to judge for themselves."

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