

Govt to publish booklet on issues

NST- #17/2006

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PUTRAJAYA: A booklet to explain all the issues raised by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be published by the Government.

It will be similar to the booklet on *Oil Price: The Role of the Government and Citizens* published by the National Economic Action Council in 2004.

The Cabinet has appointed several of its members, including Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Effendi Norwawi, to gather details and provide input for the booklet.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal said the booklet, expected to be finalised soon, would be distributed to the people for free.

The Cabinet, he said, also agreed on other methods of disseminating the explanation to the people, such as advertisements in newspapers and organising talks.

"Regardless of the approach taken to inform the people, the most important thing is that they know what the issues are so that they can understand the rationale behind the Government's decisions," he told reporters after his ministry's monthly assembly here yesterday.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar had said the Government had nothing to hide from the people in providing an explanation for the scrapping of the new bridge to replace the Causeway, the sale of sand to Singapore and the use of the Johor airspace as



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Shafie

raised by Dr Mahathir.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein had said last week there was a possibility that certain groups with vested interests were behind the attacks by Dr Mahathir on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's leadership.

Earlier in his speech, Shafie

said the Cabinet's approach in responding to the queries raised by Dr Mahathir should not be seen as being disrespectful to him.

He added that all ministers looked up to the former prime minister, who had for 22 years contributed immensely to the country's development.

However, he said, the minis-

ters must remain loyal to Abdullah.

"In short, we respect Dr Mahathir, but we are loyal to Pak Lah," he said.

Shafie said it was also in line with the teachings of Islam that followers adhere to their *imam* (leader) as long as he (the leader) did not go against Islamic teachings.