

# K. DAS & THE TUNKU TAPES



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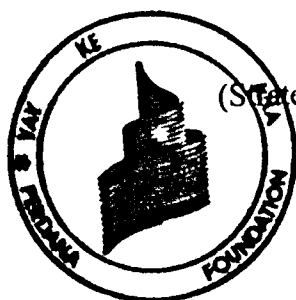
*Compiled and edited by*  
**KUA KIA SOONG**



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## **Publications by K. Das**

*Lela Mayang* (A Play)  
*The Musa Dilemma*  
*Dilema Musa* (Malay version)  
*Malay Dominance?*  
*Dominasi Melayu?* (Malay version)  
*The Things They Say About Politicians'*  
*May Day For Justice* (K. Das 1989)  
*Questionable Conduct* (K. Das 1990)

## **Publications by Kua Kia Soong\***

*Class and Communalism in Malaysia* (nom de plume Hua Wu Yin, Zed Press 1984).  
*Polarisation in Malaysia The Root Causes* (Huazi Research Centre 1987)  
*Defining Malaysian Culture* (edited, Huazi Research Centre 1987)  
*An Alternative Economic Policy* (edited, Huazi Research Centre 1990)  
*Reviewing Malaysian Education* (edited, Huazi Research Centre 1990)  
*Malaysian Cultural Policy & Democracy* (edited, Huazi Research Centre 1990)  
*Mediawatch Use & Abuse of the Malaysian Media* (edited, Huazi Research Centre 1990).  
*Malaysian Political Myths* (Huazi Research Centre 1990)  
*Malaysian Political Realities* (Oriengroup 1992)  
*Reforming Malaysia* (Oriengroup 1993).  
*Inside the DAP 1990-95* (Oriengroup 1996).  
*Malaysia's Energy Crisis: The Real Issues* (Oriengroup 1996).  
*Mob Rule: The East Timor Conference in Malaysia 1996* (edited, Suaram 1998)  
*Mother Tongue Education of Malaysian Ethnic Minorities* (DJZHLC 1998).  
*445 Days Under Operation Lalang The 1987 ISA Detentions* (Oriengroup 1999)  
*A Protean Saga: The Chinese Schools of Malaysia* (DJZ Higher Learning Centre, 1999).  
*People Before Profits* (Suaram/SIRD 2001)

\* Titles available from the author at [kuaks@pc.jaring.my](mailto:kuaks@pc.jaring.my), tel 603-87392770 x 110, fax: 603-87336799.

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# Foreword

*THE TUNKU'S AUTHORISED BIOGRAPHY* would have been K. Das' *magnum opus* had he not left us so suddenly in 1994. Das was excited about this project throughout the time I knew him. He never failed to talk about the Tunku's biography whenever we met over dinner, lunch or drinks.

Das' fascination with the Tunku had as much to do with the political events he himself had lived through as with the Malaysian political institutions he had seen assaulted and manipulated by the Mahathir administration. For Das, the Tunku stood for tolerance, accommodation and mutual respect. Das associated the Tunku era with halcyon days of his youth when ethnic relations were much more harmonious, a far cry from the contrived Islamicism and Bumiputraisim after May 13, 1969. As a writer, Das was fascinated by the Tunku's colourful character as the "prince with the heart of a commoner", the aristocrat who stood above feuds and conspiracies. The Tunku, as did Das, had nothing but contempt for the conspiratorial Malay capitalist faction who plotted his downfall and unleashed the putsch of May 13.

Das left us rather prematurely in 1994 when he was just 64, stricken by a brain tumour. As his confidante, I was most concerned that his work on the Tunku should be published since it had consumed so much of his time and passion and I persistently asked his family about its outcome. Finally, in 1999, Das' family entrusted the Tunku tapes to me and wanted me to proceed with the project. I am touched by their confidence in my commitment to Das' labour of love.

Many of his belongings had been destroyed in a fire at his lodgings in 1992 but fortunately, the tentative Introduction he had written to the Tunku's biography suddenly appeared just as I had given up hope of finding any vestige of Das' writings on the subject. It is the most fitting