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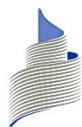
A CONVERSATION WITH

Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz



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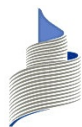
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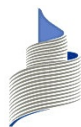
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CONTENTS

Foreword by Tan Sri Azman Hashim	6
Foreword by Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Nik Yaacob	7
Introduction	9
Profile: Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz	10
Profile: Mohd Shahwahid Haji Othman	13
Profile: Normaz Wana Ismail	15
Childhood	17
School	21
Malayan Emergency	31
Economics & University	35
Lecturing	39
Politics	35
Becoming Minister	53
International Trade	61
Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA)	71
Setting High Standards	75
Leadership	79
Women	81
Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)	83
Fears & Hopes	87
About Perdana Leadership Foundation	90



FOREWORD

Tan Sri Azman Hashim
Chairman, Board of Trustees,
Perdana Leadership Foundation

Just as an accomplished cameraman pans out and zooms in to his subject for greater effect and clarity, a keen historian employs both a macro as well as micro lens to history for deeper understanding. The sweep of history may be grand and its arc may span decades, but the view from the individual who was in the thick of it may be far different. Often, it's more nuanced and complex.

The Oral History series by the Perdana Leadership Foundation is akin to the close ups and zooms of the camera – focusing on specific individuals and their experience of history, their thinking, and their views. It is our hope that these oral history sessions will enrich the nation's documented history, and perhaps even unveil new facets of our past and present.

In this episode of our Oral History series, we had the privilege of conversing with Malaysia's longest-serving Minister of International Trade and Industry, Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz. Tan Sri Rafidah served as our Minister of International Trade for 21 years, and was also on the UMNO Supreme Council for 38 years. She was the Kuala Kangsar Member of Parliament from 1986 to 2013, winning all elections within that time period. With her impressive track record in government and now, the private sector, Tan Sri is an inspiring icon for existing and aspiring leaders, and I thank her for her time and generosity in sharing her experience as educator, minister, politician, and technocrat.

I also thank the interviewers, Professor Dr Mohd Shahwahid Othman, and Dr Normaz Wana Ismail, as well as the Oral History team, for their work in making this series a reality.

The Board of Trustees of Perdana Leadership Foundation supports this endeavour to document the personal histories of Malaysians for the benefit of future generations.

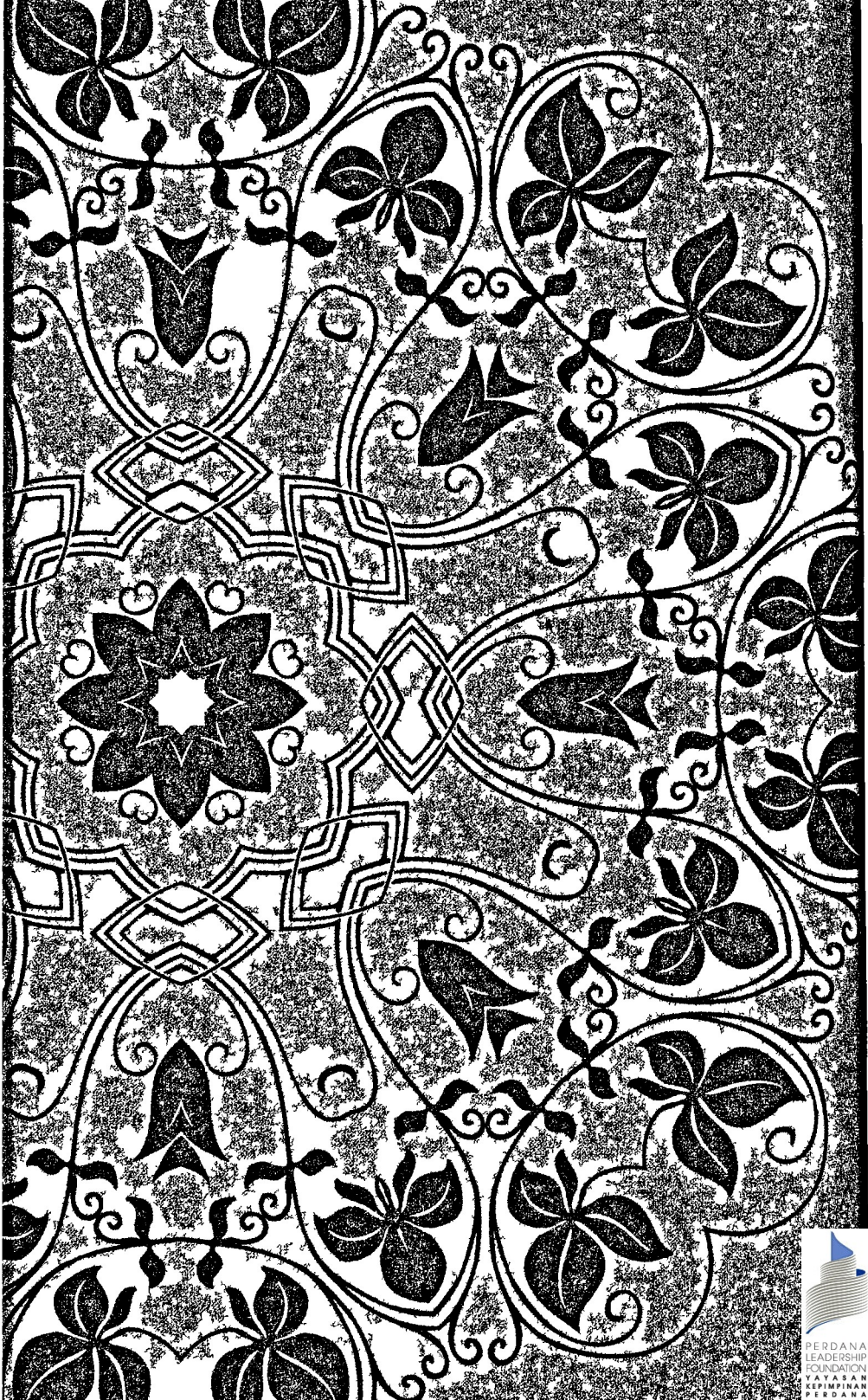
FOREWORD

Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Nik Yaacob
Executive Director,
Perdana Leadership Foundation

Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz was Malaysia's longest-serving Minister of International Trade and Industry, and the first Malay woman to earn a postgraduate degree in Economics. Those are just two of her remarkable accomplishments. She's earned her stripes in academia, government service, and politics, and in this Oral History session with Perdana Leadership Foundation, she shares tales of her childhood in the pre-Merdeka years as well as her early forays into government, and subsequently, politics. Her service in government, under different Prime Ministers, gives us insights into Malaysia's trade negotiations and her no-nonsense leadership approach. There are also many anecdotes throughout to both entertain and enlighten!

I'm grateful that Tan Sri agreed to this Oral History conversation, and thank her for her time. I also thank Professor Dr Mohd Shahwahid, and Dr Normaz Wana Ismail, of Universiti Putra Malaysia, for being our interviewers for this episode of the series.

This book will be of interest to researchers as well as members of the public who wish to know more about Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, and her views on various subjects, including international trade, politics, and Malaysia's future.





TAN SRI DATUK SERI RAFIDAH ABDUL AZIZ was Malaysia's longest-serving Minister of International Trade and Industry, holding the position from 1987 to 2008. As Minister, Tan Sri charted a firm path for Malaysia's growth as a trading nation within the ASEAN region and internationally. Under her leadership, Malaysia successfully negotiated numerous trade deals and carved concessions from multilateral agreements such as the AFTA. Although retired from politics, Tan Sri is an active corporate leader, chairing the board of AirAsia X.

Tan Sri Rafidah was one of the country's earliest professional economists, having earned her Bachelor's and Master's degree from Universiti Malaya. This conversation traces her childhood to her years in academia and subsequently, her entry into politics, highlighting the turning points and events that shaped her leadership style. She also shares her views on trade negotiations, women in leadership, education, and politics. This publication shines a spotlight on one of Malaysia's most dynamic leaders, Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz.

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