



HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad's 100th Birthday
- ◆ Spotlight ASEAN with H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
- ◆ Book Launch: A Legacy of Leadership and Vision
- ◆ Conversations with Eminent Malaysians



MESSAGE FROM
TAN SRI AZMAN HASHIM
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION



The year 2025 was one of milestones for the Perdana Leadership Foundation.

Most notably, our Honorary President, **YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad**, became Malaysia's first centenarian former Prime Minister on 10th July, with **YABhg Tun Dr Hasmah Hj Mohd Ali** reaching her 99th birthday just two days later. It was deeply moving to see the Foundation graced by well-wishers who came to honour them personally. PLF marked the occasion with a dinner celebration as well as a special exhibition of Tun's life, a reminder of his immense contributions to the nation, and an inspiration to live life with purpose.

The year also marked our inaugural collaboration with INSEAD. The **PLF-INSEAD Senior Leaders Programme** at Bukit Tinggi provided thirty corporate leaders with strategic insights and, we hope, deeper leadership wisdom. Based on this success, we look forward to organising a second cohort in 2026.

As Malaysia convened what is widely regarded as the largest ASEAN Summit to date, PLF was privileged to co-host former **Philippine President H.E. Gloria Arroyo** alongside the ASEAN Development Exchange. At our ASEAN Spotlight dinner, her address on the challenges faced by ASEAN on trade, climate change, youth engagement, and AI, was timely. Similarly, **Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid**, Chairman of CARI ASEAN, anchored our 25th Perdana Discourse Series, outlining the geopolitical options and obstacles facing our nation from his vantage point as an academic and former corporate leader.

While the world faces turbulence, our **2025 Merdeka Exhibition** reminded us of our strengths and achievements since Independence: from our world-class infrastructure to our success in vastly reducing poverty and illiteracy. Crucially, the exhibition also highlighted the pivotal, yet often quiet role women have played in Malaysia's development.

Throughout the year, we continued to document our history, with our Oral History Series featuring former Foreign Minister **Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar** and former Auditor-General **Tan Sri Ambrin Buang**, and the Perdana Library augmenting its digital archives with several thousand additional titles.

My deepest gratitude to the trustees, speakers, sponsors, partners, and participants who made our 2025 programmes successful. Here is to a brighter, more resolute year ahead.

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Engaging Minds and Preserving History

At Perdana Leadership Foundation



Students from SK Chenor taking a group photo with Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah.

In 2025, the Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF) welcomed a diverse range of visitors from Malaysia and abroad, including from countries like **Sudan**, **the Maldives**, and **Japan**. Throughout the year, we hosted local and international organisations, government agencies, libraries, academic institutions, community groups, and schools, each eager to learn more about Malaysia's leadership heritage and PLF's role in preserving it.



PLF CEO, Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, with Datuk Paduka Sulaiman Mustafa and business leaders from Japan.

Visitors were guided through the **Perdana Library**, home to 12,000 physical titles and more than 280,000 digital documents, consisting of an extensive collection of speeches by Malaysia's former Prime Ministers, policy papers, and publications that trace the nation's development from Independence to the present day. Guests took the time to explore both the physical and digital collections, gaining a deeper understanding of the depth and diversity of resources housed within the library.

From August onwards, visitors had the opportunity to experience our special exhibitions. In August and September, PLF curated the **Merdeka Exhibition**, held in conjunction with Merdeka month, celebrating the nation's journey of independence. This was held in conjunction with the **Centennial Exhibition**, held in honour of **Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad's 100th birthday**. This special exhibition showcased highlights from Tun's life, together with quotes from his landmark speeches, and the national milestones that marked his leadership as Malaysia's fourth and seventh Prime Minister.



Tun Dr Mahathir with members of RIASNITA Masjid Kg. Tunku, Petaling Jaya.



Delegates from Sudan posing for a group photo at our main entrance.



Students of SK Paya Mengkuang, Gurun, Kedah, touring the Merdeka Exhibition.



In September, PLF staff visited Galeria Seri Perdana to learn about its exhibits.



Children from Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Kedah being briefed on Perdana Library.



Maldivian librarians on our iconic staircase.

Located in a scenic lakeside enclave of Precinct 8, Putrajaya, **PLF welcomes group visits on weekdays**. Appointments may be made through library@perdana.org.my or 03-8885 8961. The Perdana Library operates from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and is open to members of the public. Access to physical facilities and full library services is available for members, with membership starting from just RM10 per year.

To join as a member, visit <https://bit.ly/PLFMembership2025>.



Tun Dr Mahathir during a recording session of PODCAST DR M.

Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad: A Life of Leadership and Vision

Throughout 2025, **Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad** remained as engaged and active as ever, meeting an endless stream of people in his office, sharing his views and opinions at speaking engagements and through his popular podcast series **“PODCAST DR M”**, as well as visiting enterprises and businesses in various parts of the country.



Tun Dr Mahathir receiving a courtesy visit from Baron Saffraz, member of the House of Lords, UK.



A visit to meet Former President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, in Banjarsari, Solo. Flanking the gentlemen are the wife of Joko Widodo, Madam Iriana, and Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir.



Tun Dr Mahathir strolling through a local bazaar.



Tun Dr Mahathir riding a bicycle during his 100th birthday picnic.



A proud milestone — Tun Dr Mahathir receiving an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Kyushu University for his lifelong contributions to knowledge, culture, and education.

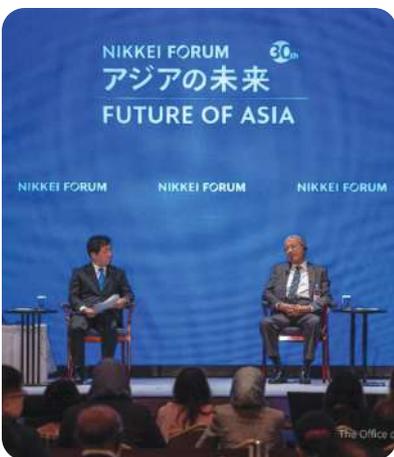
Given his busy schedule, **Perdana Leadership Foundation** was privileged to host Malaysia's fourth and seventh Prime Minister at several key programmes. He graced the launch of PLF's publication, ***A Conversation with Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad: A Legacy of Leadership and Vision***, where he highlighted the importance of culture, values, education, and ethics in driving national progress. At the **PLF Merdeka Dialogue** where he was keynote speaker, Tun reminded Malaysians that independence is a priceless gift earned through the sacrifices of earlier generations which should not be forgotten. And, of course, Tun was the centre of attention on 10th of July when he turned 100 with members of the public queuing to greet him and **Tun Dr Hasmah** in person to relay their well wishes. That Tun is the only former Prime Minister to live a full century is already a milestone but that he arrived at the centennial mark with the energy and mental sharpness of a person half his age is a source of inspiration to all Malaysians.

It is not just Malaysians who are inspired by Tun. 2025 marked his **26th appearance at the Nikkei Forum: The**

Future of Asia where he spoke on Asian issues of concern. He also gave a lecture at Kyoto University on "Asia and the World on the Brink" and visited Itabashi Ward at the invitation of its mayor. As part of his Japanese trip, Tun travelled to **Nagasaki** to commemorate the anniversary of the horrific atomic bombing of the city. His other travels abroad in 2025 included a short visit to **Solo** where he met with former **Indonesian President Joko Widodo**.

Throughout the year, Tun also welcomed distinguished visitors to his office, including **The Lord Sarfraz** from the United Kingdom, and **Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yunus**, Chief Advisor of the Interim Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

As 2025 draws to a close, Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad continues to inspire through his focus, determination, and strength of purpose. His journey reminds us that **leadership is not measured by age but by dedication to service**, and Tun's commitment to Malaysia remains as strong and as resilient as his spirit.



A familiar sight — Tun Dr Mahathir returning to the 30th Nikkei Forum: Future of Asia.



Raya Group photo: Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah sharing a happy moment with staff of PLF, JPM, PGPF, and HIAF during the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration.

A Night of Tribute and Celebration in Honour of Malaysia's Longest- Serving Prime Minister



Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah during the pulut kuning cutting ceremony.

On the evening of 3rd August 2025, Perdana Leadership Foundation hosted a dinner celebration in honour of Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad's 100th and Tun Dr Hasmah Hj Mohd Ali's 99th birthdays. Held at Perdana Leadership Foundation, **"TunDrMahathir@100: The Centennial Celebration. Honouring a Life of Vision, Leadership, and Impact"** was a lively yet casual mix of dinner, music, video, and speeches with around two hundred distinguished guests. Thanks to our Chairman,

Tan Sri Azman Hashim, the **Universiti Malaya Symphony Orchestra (UMSO)** provided the musical backdrop for the evening, led by **Professor Dr Nasir Hashim** and guest-starring professional violinist **Dr Yi Li Chang** who serenaded the arrival of Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah with a beautiful rendition of "Love Story". Guests were also invited to capture photos at a specially set-up photo booth and to write heartfelt messages for the Tuns.

“I wish I could go back. It was very enjoyable being young. Of course, being 100 years old is great, but being young like all of you is much better. So, please enjoy yourselves while you’re still young.”

- Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad

In his welcome address, Tan Sri Azman Hashim, Chairman of PLF’s Board of Trustees, reflected on Tun Dr Mahathir’s leadership qualities, describing him as **a man of adventure, fearlessness, and diplomatic finesse**. He highlighted Tun’s **decisiveness**, particularly during critical times, noting how his bold choices not only propelled Malaysia’s development but also elevated the nation’s standing on the global stage.

Tan Sri Azman Hashim lived up to his moniker, The Singing Banker, that evening, when he entertained the guests with eight of Tun’s favourite songs, his dynamic performance accompanied by UMSO. The audience were also given a special treat when Tun Dr Hasmah performed Gubahanku and Bisikan Hati on her violin, and artist **Datuk Nora Ariffin** made a special surprise appearance, belting out crowd favourites including Bunyi Gitar and Hanya Satu.

During the event, tribute videos, painstakingly prepared by **Ms Qistina** and **Mr Faridzuan** of PLF’s Communications team, celebrated the life of Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad along with the 69th wedding anniversary of Tun and Tun Dr Hasmah. The celebration was capped by a **pulut kuning and birthday cake** ceremony, where Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah were presented with a grand pulut kuning from Perdana Leadership Foundation and two beautiful birthday cakes from Berjaya Corporation.



The birthday couple during Tan Sri Azman Hashim’s welcome remarks.



Tun Dr Mahathir sharing a few words of wisdom.



Tun Dr Hasmah gave a special violin performance.

The evening would not have been complete without a few words of wisdom from the star of the event. During Tun Dr Mahathir’s brief speech, he reminded people to appreciate their young and healthy years. “So many pictures from the past — I wish I could go back. It was very enjoyable being young. Of course, being 100 years old is great, but being young like all of you is much better. So, please enjoy yourselves while you’re still young,” he said with good humour. At the event’s finale, Tan Sri Azman Hashim presented a special gift on behalf of Perdana Leadership Foundation to Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah: a specially commissioned artwork to commemorate Tun’s 100th birthday on 10th July 2025, by Malaysia’s beloved cartoonist, **Seniman Agung Datuk Lat**. It beautifully captures the warmth, humour, and enduring partnership of Malaysia’s most iconic couple, as well as the legacy of a leader who has profoundly shaped the nation’s history.

The **Perdana Leadership Foundation** extends its sincere appreciation to our trustees, guests, and staff members who made the evening a truly meaningful celebration of leadership, legacy, and national pride. A special thanks to **Tan Sri Azman Hashim, the UM Symphony Orchestra, Tan Sri Vincent Tan, and Berjaya Corporation** for their support of the event.



Tan Sri Azman Hashim presented the special artwork by Datuk Lat to Tun Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Hasmah.



Tan Sri Azman Hashim performing on stage, featuring Dr Yi Li Chang, Violin Senior Lecturer at the Music Department of Universiti Malaya.



Special guest artist Datuk Nora Ariffin.



The birthday couple with the members of PLF's Board of Trustees.

Back Row : Mr Amir Mahmood Abdul Razak Bahman, Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, Mr Shane Guha Thakurta, and Mr Tey Kwan Wey
 Standing from left to right

Front Row : Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Nik Yaacob, Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack, Tan Sri Datuk Tee Hock Seng JP, Tan Sri Azman Hashim, Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, Tun Dr Hasmah Hj Mohd Ali, Tan Sri Vincent Tan Chee Yioun, Dato' Sri Robin Tan, Dato' Paduka Sulaiman Mustafa, and Datuk Lee Hau Hian
 Seated from left to right



Tun Dr Mahathir & Tun Dr Hasmah with the cakes specially prepared by Berjaya Corporation.



Tun signing a guest's photocard.



The Universiti Malaya Symphony Orchestra team.



Guests took the time to pen heartfelt messages in the guest book.



Dato' Mukhriz Mahathir with Tan Sri Azman Hashim.



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad watching a video montage of his life.



The loving couple captured on video!



Guests enjoyed a lively and warm evening at the Perdana Leadership Foundation, marked by lively conversation, good food, and a celebratory atmosphere.



Some of the VIP guests in attendance.



Tun Dr Mahathir & Tun Dr Hasmah with PLF staff.

A Life of Vision, Leadership and Impact: Celebrating Tun Dr Mahathir's 100 Years



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia.



Exhibition: Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad reviewing his life at the Centennial Exhibition, accompanied by Puan Zarina Abu Bakar.

From August to December 2025, the Perdana Leadership Foundation presented **TunDrMahathir@100: The Centennial Celebration**, a special biographical exhibition honouring the life, vision, and enduring impact of Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad. Commemorating his 100th birthday, the exhibition highlighted his remarkable journey as a statesman, showcasing his contributions to Malaysia's development and his lifelong commitment to leadership and nation-building.

Featuring key milestones, archival photos, and Tun's quotes, the exhibition serves as a tribute to a leader whose ideas continue to influence the nation. The exhibition was held at the Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya.



A delighted visitor receiving an autograph from Tun Dr Mahathir.



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad in front of the timeline of his personal and professional achievements.



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad signs the mock book and officially launches the publication.

The Progress of a Nation Depends on its Value System:

Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad at the Official Launch of 'A Legacy of Leadership and Vision'

What drives economic development? What defines leadership? And what traits must a nation cultivate to prosper? These were among the central questions explored in Perdana Leadership Foundation's latest publication, **A Conversation with Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad: A Legacy of Leadership and Vision**.

The book is part of the Foundation's **Oral History Series**, a long-term initiative to document conversations with past and present leaders. This volume captures a series of in-depth dialogues between **Tun Dr Mahathir** and two interviewers: **Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan**, Trustee of the Foundation, and **Mr Eddin Khoo**, founder of PUSAKA. Spanning conversations held between 2020 and 2023, the publication presents Tun's reflections on leadership, development, governance, and Malaysia's evolving socio-economic landscape.

The book was officially launched on Monday, 19th May 2025, in Putrajaya. In his Welcome Address, **Tan Sri Azman Hashim**, Chairman of PLF's Board of Trustees, highlighted the significance of the publication, noting that the conversations explored Malaysia's economic policies across different eras, the wealth divide, technology adoption, corruption, globalisation, and leadership — showcasing *"the depth and breadth of Tun's knowledge and insights."*

The launch also featured a Special Dialogue themed **"Challenges of Economic Development in the 21st Century"** where Tun Dr Mahathir shared the stage with Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan and economist **Dr Muhammed Abdul Khalid**, Research Fellow at IKMAS, UKM, and Fellow at the World Inequality Lab, Paris School of Economics. Throughout the session,

Tun spoke extensively about the cultural foundations of economic success. He reiterated the **importance of values, ethics, and education** in determining a nation's trajectory. Reflecting on his travels abroad, he remarked:

“As Prime Minister, I visited many countries and saw that while some thrived, others remained poor. It wasn't due to resources or climate, but culture. A nation's success depends on its value system: strong values bring advancement; weak ones lead to decline.”

This emphasis on culture and values echoed key exchanges from the book. When asked about whether Malaysia had emulated the right character and value system, Tun responded:

“When we adopted the Look East Policy, it did not mean we ignored the West. We looked to the West and took what was useful, but in the East, we found models of countries like ours that became developed and were able to compete strongly. Ultimately, we need to copy the best models, whether they come from the East or the West. Japan, for example, succeeded because their culture



Group photo with all guests and speakers.

pushed them to catch up with the West quickly; they worked hard because they wanted to protect and defend themselves.”

Education, too, featured prominently in both the book and the session. When asked what he would prioritise if given the opportunity to serve as Minister of Education, Tun reflected:

“Education determines the kind of people (we have) in this country... Our education system is a little bit out of date. Things are changing around us. We must respond to the change... In later years, I hope that our students will not just be users but the people who invent and innovate.”

The programme concluded with a lively and engaging Q&A session, where attendees posed questions on the Look East Policy, education, the US–China trade war, and the role of youth in nation-building. One participant asked why Malaysia's public education system is failing, to which Tun responded candidly:

“We are still doing what we have done 2,000 years ago. The stress is more on knowledge and not on values. Therefore, the government should also focus on moral education to produce people who are morally upright and will not allow themselves to be corrupted. If you do that, Malaysia will be a much healthier place.”

He also addressed the challenge of turning vision into lasting results, adding:

“It is a matter of your belief system. When you feel pride in what you produce, you will try your best. But I must admit that changing the value system of a people is very difficult. It can be done, but it is very difficult.”

The event drew more than 300 attendees and was graced by **YABhg Tun Dr Hasmah Mohd Ali**, whose presence added warmth to the occasion.



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad with the newly launched book, flanked by (from left to right): PLF Adviser Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Nik Yaacob, PLF Trustee Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan, PLF Chairman Tan Sri Azman Hashim, and PLF CEO Puan Zarina Abu Bakar.

H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Elaborates on ASEAN'S Bright but Challenging Future



H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (center), photographed on stage with (from left to right): Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, Mr Mahmood Razak Bahman, Mr Anil Pillay, and Mr Nigel Wong.



Mr Mahmood Razak Bahman, CEO of PUSPAKOM and Trustee of Perdana Leadership Foundation, delivered the Welcome Remarks.

On the sidelines of the momentous ASEAN Summit 2025 chaired by Malaysia, **Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)**, in collaboration with **ASEAN Development Exchange (ADX)**, were privileged to host the 14th President of the Philippines, **Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo**, as Keynote Speaker of Spotlight ASEAN, a lecture and networking event centred around ASEAN, on 24th October 2025,

A distinguished economist and seasoned stateswoman, H.E. Gloria Arroyo shared her thoughts on **"ASEAN in Economically Turbulent Times - What is the Way Ahead?"** with more than 100 distinguished guests, including business leaders, economists, and academics.

Ms Arroyo drew on her wide experience as former leader of the Philippines who initiated successful economic transformations that led to her nation's steady economic

growth, and as an ASEAN leader who advocated for regional integration and sustainable development.

Held at the Grand Congress, Sunway Resort Hotel, the dinner commenced with Welcome Remarks by **Mr Mahmood Razak Bahman**, Chief Executive Officer, PUSPAKOM and Trustee, Perdana Leadership Foundation, who highlighted the importance of ASEAN to Malaysia.

"Since ASEAN's founding in 1967, the ambition has been to create a powerhouse of regional cooperation, representing the shared interests of its sovereign members. It is precisely this principle of collective strength that makes today's discourse so critical. The theme points to the challenge of our time. The turbulence is not a forecast. It is here in the reality of new tariff regimes and superpower trade wars,

in the economic shifts driven by Artificial Intelligence, the widening gap of income inequality, and the escalating pressures of climate change. The timing is also auspicious. As Malaysia prepares to pass the baton of ASEAN chairmanship to the Philippines next year, the insights we glean tonight will carry a special significance, bridging one chapter of leadership to the next," Mr Mahmood said.

In her keynote address, Ms Arroyo delivered a compelling reflection on ASEAN's remarkable journey over the past few decades, made even more meaningful as her father, former President **Diosdado Pangan Macapagal**, was one of the founders of MAPHILINDO (a proposed loose political association of Malaya, Indonesia, and the Philippines). She underscored the region's enduring strength and unity, noting that ASEAN has successfully weathered numerous economic downturns through a steadfast commitment to stability, cooperation, and mutual respect among its member states.

"The earlier MAPHILINDO embodied what scholars now call 'The ASEAN Way' - conscientious, quiet diplomacy, and respect for sovereignty. That ASEAN Way has allowed our diversity to become a source of strength, not division," said Ms Arroyo on the lessons of the ASEAN forefathers.



H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, delivered an emphatic Keynote Address on ASEAN's future.



Fireside Chat with H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, moderated by Mr Ben Davis, Head of the Malaysian Wealth Group, Melbourne Capital Group.

She further observed that, despite internal challenges, including youth-led protests in Nepal, tensions along the Thailand-Cambodia border, and natural disasters in parts of the Philippines, **ASEAN continues to exemplify resilience and dynamism**, standing as one of the world's most robust regional blocs. President Arroyo also highlighted the important role that Malaysia has played in ASEAN and continues to play with the successful convening of the 47th ASEAN Summit.

On ASEAN's challenges, Her Excellency stressed the need to address issues concerning youth engagement (she particularly noted the communication gaps between government and Gen-Z), technological disruption (which necessitates workforce upskilling), economic competitiveness (many ASEAN countries have the same economic structure which makes them competitors more than complements), regional security (especially in light of competing claims, and terrorism), and climate resilience (in the face of unpredictable weather phenomenon, and the ensuing economic loss).

Her emphatic keynote was followed by a fireside chat moderated by **Mr Ben Davis**, Head of the Malaysian Wealth Group, Melbourne Capital Group. Mr Davis posed

questions to President Arroyo on a range of issues, including digital transformation, tariff negotiations, climate action, and the importance of collective regional commitment.

When asked about digital transformation, H.E. Gloria Arroyo remarked, **"ASEAN is a very young population. Our younger generations are born into it (digital), and digital transformation will be led by our youths. We should harness their energy, creativity, and native literacy, so that we can strengthen our efforts in the digitalisation of our world. I would say that the young ones are 'digitalisation-personified'."**

The session concluded with closing remarks by **Mr Nigel Wong**, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) and Co-Founder of ADX, before dinner was served.

PLF and ADX extend their deepest appreciation to **DRB-HICOM Berhad, Citadel Group, RHB Bank, YTL Corporation Berhad, Qube Integrated Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Travel Weekly Asia, and Global Net Travel** for their sponsorship. Special thanks also to supporting organisations: the **Melbourne Capital Group** and the **Malaysian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Philippines (MCCI)**, as well as to **Sunway Resort Hotel** for its warm hospitality.

Earlier in the day, President Arroyo was officially welcomed by the hosts, PLF and ADX, as well as sponsor representatives at an exclusive breakfast at the Gordon Ramsay Bar & Grill. The breakfast

opened with welcome remarks by **Mr Anil Pillay**, Co-Founder of ADX, and was facilitated by **Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack**, Trustee, Perdana Leadership Foundation.



Nasi lemak tote bags with batik motif, a special gift for those who joined us at breakfast



Breakfast with H.E. Gloria Arroyo



"Smile for the camera!"



Tunku Dato' Seri Utama Naquiyuddin ibni Almarhum Tuanku Ja'afar was a special guest at the event.



Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, pictured with Dr Nungsari Ahmad Radhi (right) and Dr Muhammed Abdul Khalid (left).



Mr Nigel Wong, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) and Co-Founder of ADX.



Ms Ireem Chew, Director of Commercial, Sunway Resort Hotel, with the Guest Speaker



H.E. Gloria Arroyo on stage with Mr Mahmood Razak Bahman, CEO of PUSPAKOM, as well as management and staff of Modenas and DRB-HICOM.



The PLF team with the former President of the Philippines.



The Evolution of Malaysian Foreign Policy

Kuala Lumpur once prized non-alignment above all else – now it sees Beijing as more reliable than lectures from the West.

by **Murni Abdul Hamid**

Malaysia's approach in navigating great power rivalry since the Cold War has largely been based on the principles of **non-alignment, neutralism, and equidistance**. However, two contrasting snapshots of the country's Independence (Merdeka) Day celebration – half a century apart – offer an interesting perspective on whether Malaysia's contemporary position has shifted away from these principles.

On 31 August 1973, Malaysia's second Prime Minister, **Tun Abdul Razak**, hastily left the joyous Merdeka celebration midway to depart for Algiers and lead the Malaysian delegation to the **Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) Summit**. It was his first time attending the summit. It had taken several attempts for Malaysia to become a NAM member, largely due to Indonesia's opposition and influence within the Afro-Asian

group during the Konfrontasi period. Malaysia's experience of Konfrontasi and the retreat of the British from the region pushed the country to seek friends among other newly independent states.

When Malaysia finally became a NAM member in 1970, its foreign policy gradually shifted away from heavy reliance on the United Kingdom toward a more neutral and non-aligned stance. Against this background, Tun Razak strongly felt the need for Malaysia to be represented at the highest level in Algiers to signify the country's commitment to non-alignment – even if it meant leaving the Merdeka celebration halfway.

Jump forward just over 50 years to 31 August 2025, Malaysia's tenth Prime Minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**, left at the conclusion of the nation's Merdeka celebration

to immediately depart for China to attend the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit**. It was the first time Malaysia had participated in the SCO, in which Malaysia is neither a member nor an observer. It was also the first time a Malaysian leader attended China's "Victory Parade" in Beijing, which this year took place a few days later, to commemorate the end of the Second World War, alongside other leaders including from Russia, North Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Iran.

Since becoming Prime Minister in late 2022, Anwar has visited China four times, with China's President and Premier reciprocating accordingly (also a total of four times if including the upcoming ASEAN Summit and other meetings next month).

While China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner since 2009,

relations with China have further intensified in recent years both bilaterally and multilaterally.

These include Malaysia's active involvement in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and participation in the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP)**. Stronger ties also extend to decisions to allow Chinese companies to develop the country's second 5G network and to revitalise Malaysia's national car industry, the recent acceptance of China's vision of building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, and the landmark creation of a bilateral mechanism with China to discuss maritime issues. Malaysia's decision to join **BRICS**, and the initiative to bring in China into the **ASEAN-GCC platform** by hosting the first-ever ASEAN-GCC-China Summit in Kuala Lumpur, also illustrate the depth of relations.

While Malaysia's intensification of cooperation with China should not be viewed as a zero-sum game, it is hard to ignore that this occurred against the backdrop of deteriorating relations with the United States. From the perspective of Malaysian leaders, the more benign power and trusted partner today is not the United States, but China. This, in spite of several challenges, particularly in the South China Sea.

In Anwar's speech during **President Xi Jinping's** visit to Malaysia earlier this year, he praised China as **a rational, steady, and reliable partner amid the turbulence**

“Understandably, as an independent nation, no country appreciates being told who it should be friends with.”

of **“economic tribalism” and threats to multilateralism and the rules-based order**. Last year, when Anwar spoke off-the-cuff at a business luncheon in honour of **Premier Li Qiang** in Kuala Lumpur, he commended the attitude of the Chinese leadership as “friendly, courteous, full of respect, [and] understanding of cultures and differences”, in contrast to the “narrative from the others” and the “barrage of questions” from others – especially “the western” – on whether Malaysia's close relations with China would be in Malaysia's best interest.

Understandably, as an independent nation, no country appreciates being told who it should be friends with, especially when those doing the lecturing neither act as they preach nor have been reliable friends in the first place.

While closer relations with the United States would still serve Malaysia's interests – particularly in the realms of the economy and defence – they are proving even more elusive under **President Donald Trump**. His arbitrary tariff impositions, aggressive rhetoric (even against allies), withdrawals from multilateral organisations, disregard for the rule of law, undermining of the global order, and coddling of Israel have been obstacles for Malaysian leaders in promoting closer ties with the United States. Domestically, various opinion polls in recent years have shown a steady decline in Malaysians' favourable perceptions towards the United States, while favourable views of China and even Russia have increased significantly.

If the above trend persists, Malaysia might find itself moving even further away from its non-aligned, neutral, and equidistant stances that served it well in the past. At present, however, the actions of the great powers leave little room



Tun Abdul Razak signing the friendship agreement between Malaysia and China during a visit to China, 2 June 1974.

for Malaysia to manoeuvre, and siding with the more predictable and reliable power seems to be the less risky option.

This article was first published in *The Interpreter*, a publication of the Lowy Institute, on 24 September 2025. Emphases are ours.

Scan the QR Code to read the original article.



◆ ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Murni Abdul Hamid is a career diplomat with over twenty years of service at the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and over two years at the Malaysian Prime Minister's Office. She has undertaken bilateral and multilateral postings in The Hague, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Murni holds a degree in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), a master's degree from the International University of Japan (IUJ) and is currently pursuing her PhD at the Australian National University (ANU).

The views expressed in this article are entirely her own and do not represent the official position of the Government of Malaysia.

A Life in Service:

Reflections of Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Syed Hamid Albar

“Law provides regulation; justice dispenses mercy and compassion.” So stated **Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Syed Hamid Albar**, lawyer, statesman, and former Cabinet Minister who PLF was privileged to host for two in-depth Oral History sessions in late 2025. Led by **Mr Ahmad Yazid Ahmad Puad**, Managing Director and Documentary Producer at Rack Focus Films Sdn. Bhd., and **Dr Danial Yusof**, Director of the Centre for Peace, Dialogue and Xenophobia Studies (PEDIXS), International

Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the conversations with Tan Sri illuminated his early life and his entry into law, as well as his involvement in politics and later segue into academia. A seasoned politician, Tan Sri shared his insights with humour and flair, peppering his responses with anecdotes from his rich and interesting career.

The Oral History conversations will be published in 2026. Meanwhile, enjoy the excerpts of the dialogue.

Background Image: Puan Sri Sharifah Aziah sketches a portrait of Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar during the interview session.



Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar, former Cabinet Minister of Malaysia.



All smiles for the camera.

“Growing up, I always did well in religious school and often came first in class. For a long time, I thought I would become an Ustaz; my father even arranged for a tutor to teach me Arabic because he believed that would be my path. But I was drawn to law — not just as a profession, but as a principle. I believed that the law must be fair, that it must be exercised justly, and that enforcement must never be selective. So, I told my mother that I wished to study the law not for its prestige, but to truly understand it and to defend the rights of the people.”

Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES:

Mr Ahmad Yazid Ahmad Puad (AY):
Tan Sri, what was it like growing up in your family?

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Syed Hamid Albar (TSSHA)

I was born before Independence, in 1944, just as the Japanese were about to surrender. People from Johor often regard me as Johorean, and I consider myself one too, but technically I was born in Penang. I grew up in Johor, and most of my roots and family members are there. That is why I tend to speak with a Johor-Riau accent. I remember Dr Abdul Malik Munip, former lecturer, Universiti Malaya (UM) and former Member of Parliament for Muar, once said that when I answered questions in Parliament, he could hear the unmistakable tone of Johor-Riau in my voice. It is true, although I started speaking with a slight northern inflection after marrying my wife, who is from Kedah. All my children feel as if they are pure Kedahan, but I always remind them that they are Johorean. In any case, this mix gives me a broader perspective.

I was born in a port city, in one of the early Malay settlement areas in Penang — Kampung Melayu, Ayer Hitam — which was then a protected Malay settlement. I visited recently, and of course, the place is very different now. So, when you ask me, what life was like, I would put it simply: life was easy-going and simple. There was less rush, yet there was a strong sense of purpose and objective. You tended to know everyone, and that fostered a real sense of community. **If you look at the meaning of *kampung*, it is essentially about living together — a community where people understand one another.**

A CAREER IN POLITICS:

AY:

Earlier, you spoke about the principles of justice and fairness. So, returning to that, what are your thoughts on the current political situation in Malaysia, and where it is headed?

TSSHA:

I think we have regressed. We have separated politics from ethics and morality; we have separated law from morality. Decisions are often made in a way that is too **Machiavellian** — where the end you want to achieve becomes more important than the means used to reach it.

In today's politics, people increasingly question what they perceive as hypocrisy, double standards, and the unequal application of the law. This is how the public views the current political landscape. And if you observe the situation globally, not just in Malaysia, people are becoming disillusioned and even disgusted with politics because many political actors are driven by opportunism and personal ambition rather than service. They are not thinking about the people; instead, for some, the question becomes: "What can politics give to me?" During my time, our salaries were much lower than what ministers receive today. Even our pensions are lower than those of current Members of Parliament. Ministers today are paid very well. There should be no reason to compromise principles.

For me, **the guiding principle is service. If you are no longer able to serve, then you should not remain in your position. Public office is not about serving yourself; it is about serving the people.** And to serve means that if you can no longer contribute meaningfully — if you can no longer do what is beneficial for the public — then it is better to step aside. Unfortunately, today, when you question the actions of those in the administration, people quickly assume you are anti-government. That should not be the case. **Accountability is not hostility; it is part of responsible governance.**

EDUCATION:

Dr Danial Yusof (DY):

Tan Sri, I think you are a great example of lifelong learning in Malaysia. You first studied law and then after your long stint in politics, you pursued political science and international relations. How did these experiences shape your understanding of the relationship between education and leadership?

TSSHA:

I am a strong believer that we must return to the teachings of Islam. Why did Allah not reveal Surah Al-Fatihah first? Instead, through Jibril, Allah instructed Rasulullah SAW (Prophet Muhammad PBUH) with Iqra' (read). It tells us about the creation of human beings and highlights the importance of knowledge. **Leadership without knowledge endangers the people you lead.** It is only through knowledge that your mind opens; it enables you to reflect and to make proper assessments.

In my own case, I have never felt that I possess enough knowledge. I always feel the need to continue learning. That is why I kept enrolling in programmes. When I returned from the UK, even before I began my career, I gathered a small group of three or four friends, and we invited young people to join us. We provided tuition on legal matters — business law, how to form companies, how to borrow from banks, and so on.

The good thing about law is that it gives you the foundation to enter any field. If you want to practise, you can become an advocate and solicitor. Otherwise, the discipline itself trains you to be analytical and critical. That is why someone who is strong in mathematics, for example, will excel in law — because both fields require logic, reasoning, and rational thinking.

ADVICE TO YOUNG MALAYSIANS:

AY:

Tan Sri, younger people are facing more challenges than ever before. Given your decades of experience — including in your roles as a father and a grandfather — what advice would you like to share with young Malaysians today?

TSSHA:

I think the most important advice — and something I always tell my children and the people I know — is this: **Do not seek to be rich; seek to be successful.** If you seek wealth for its own sake, you may be overtaken by greed and lose your way before you ever reach your goal. But if you strive to be successful, and you pursue that success properly and honourably, recognition and rewards will come naturally.

For the young today, I believe the most important thing is to **build character before you chase the material world.** Build your character, because your character is your inner strength — your defence against all challenges. Without character, you may falter when difficulties arise.

You must also recognise that you are an amanah — a trust from God — to the world. If you are entrusted with something, you must fulfil that trust. And what is that trust? It is to uphold justice, to be fair, to exercise authority with an understanding of your responsibilities, and to exercise your rights with an awareness of your accountability.

I believe young people need to embrace this mindset, and it must begin at home.



Empowering Leadership Through Wisdom and Purpose



Professor Marc le Menestrel formally introduced himself to the participants.

On 19th–21st August 2025, **Perdana Leadership Foundation**, in partnership with **INSEAD Executive Education**, hosted its inaugural **Senior Leaders Development Programme** at the tranquil Chateau Spa & Wellness Resort, Bukit Tinggi. The programme was designed to introduce the principles of **Wise Power**, deepen understanding of power dynamics at the global, organisational, and individual levels, prepare leaders for critical situations, and strengthen their ability to influence, decide, and lead with purpose.

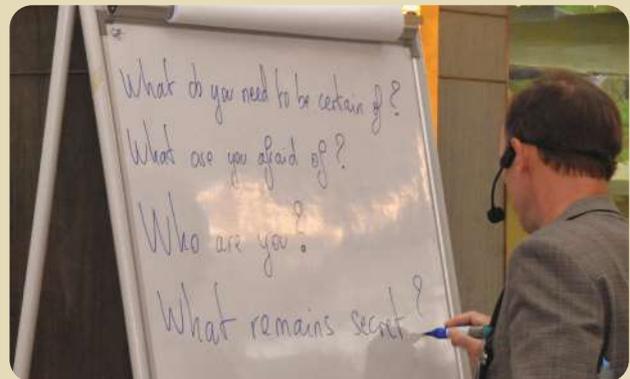
The retreat began on the 19th with the arrival of participants and a welcome dinner where **Puan Zarina Abu Bakar**, CEO of the Perdana Leadership Foundation, delivered her welcome speech and introduced the programme's facilitator, **Professor Marc le Menestrel**. The dinner provided participants with an opportunity to network with one another and Professor Marc, setting up a collaborative tone for the days ahead.



The first full day began with a focus on Global Dynamics & Wise Power, where participants explored **how emotions shape the boundaries of our thinking**. A key learning point from the morning session was the introduction to global governance through the three spheres—political, social, and economic—highlighting how these interconnected dimensions influence decision-making and leadership.

In the afternoon, attention turned to Organisational Strategic Dilemmas, where mini case studies and group discussions encouraged participants to position themselves strategically, reflect before acting, and exchange perspectives with one another. Guided by the reflective questions “What are you learning?” and “How can it be useful to you?”, the day ended with a palpable sense of energy and connection among the group.

The final day opened with Decision-Making in the Grey Zone, which tested participants’ ability to **navigate**



Questions to ponder over

complex and uncertain circumstances. Through thought-provoking questions and debate, Professor Marc pushed participants to balance personal conviction and morality against organisational responsibility. The programme concluded with **Wise Power in Action**, a reflective session that allowed participants to integrate their learnings, align their thinking, emotions, and purpose, and clarify their short-, medium-, and long-term leadership strategies.



Professor Marc Le Menestrel of INSEAD, facilitated the entire 2-day programme.

Perdana Leadership Foundation extends its congratulations to all participants for their commitment and spirit. With senior leaders from 19 organisations, the programme was a valuable platform for idea-exchange and knowledge-sharing, as well as deep learning. We also record our sincere appreciation to our partner, INSEAD Executive Education, and Professor Marc Le Menestrel, as well as to the **Berjaya Group** and **The Chateau Spa & Wellness Resort** for their invaluable support and warm hospitality. We look forward to hosting future editions of the leadership retreat to foster the spirit of learning and collaboration among business leaders.



Feeling the vibe of The Chateau's La Serre Glasshouse.



"Be cool, now. He's taking our photo".



Active participation during the programme!



Prof Marc le Menestrel, INSEAD Programme Director.



Exchanging lessons learned for the day



A smile is a good sign!



Presenting the group's collective thoughts.



Never too busy for a quick photo!



Participants pair up for the penultimate segment.



Realigning personal and professional goals.



Congratulations to all participants!



Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, CEO of Perdana Leadership Foundation, delivering her Closing Remarks.

Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid Expounds on The Shifting Global Order at the 25th Perdana Discourse Series



(from left to right): Encik Cairil Irwan Amir, Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid, Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan, and Puan Zarina Abu Bakar.

Global power plays, trade agreements, and national interests were among the subjects raised in Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid's keynote address on "**Malaysia Amidst a Changing Global Order: Challenges, Choices & Opportunities**", delivered on **5th November 2025** at the Perdana Discourse Series. The 25th edition of Perdana Leadership Foundation's flagship lecture series, the keynote explored how Malaysia can remain resilient and relevant amid shifting geopolitical and economic dynamics.

The Discourse began with opening remarks by **Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack**, Trustee of the Perdana Leadership Foundation, who remarked that *"Malaysia stands at a pivotal moment in an increasingly complex global order. The world today is marked by great power rivalries, shifting trade patterns, armed conflicts, and rapid technological change — developments that carry significant implications for our nation's sovereignty, economic resilience, and long-held commitment to non-alignment."*

In his frank and illuminating keynote address, **Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid**, Chairman of CARI ASEAN and Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre for International Affairs, Diplomacy and Strategy, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), noted that while Malaysia has explored various trade arrangements, the rapidly evolving global environment requires the nation to continually reassess its strategies to remain competitive and relevant. He highlighted that the United States, under President Trump, is strategically using market

access, inbound investment, and geo-economic influence as tools of leverage in international relations. Malaysia, he said, must understand and manage its choices prudently in the face of these pressures.

He further stressed that **Malaysia's foreign policy should not be framed as a choice between major powers such as the United States and China**. *"Our decisions must be made based on Malaysia's national interests — not on external pressures,"* he stated, adding that Malaysia must engage big powers constructively and strategically, rather than reactively, in response to geopolitical shifts.

Tan Sri Dr Munir also observed that Malaysia possesses a wealth of talent and expertise yet has not always fully utilised these strengths. *"We have capable people, but the question remains: are we truly making use of them?"* he emphasised. He proposed the establishment of an independent Council on Foreign Relations to analyse Malaysia's strategic relationships and advise on foreign policy.

Following the keynote session, the discourse continued with an engaging panel session with **Dr Azmi Hassan**, Senior Fellow at the Nusantara Academy and Fellow of the National Council of Professors, and **Dr Ngeow Chow Bing**, Associate Professor and Director of the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, moderated by **Mr Ismail Adnan**, News Anchor and Presenter, Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM). The session offered deeper insights into Malaysia's strategic position, highlighting the importance of **pragmatic diplomacy and coherent policy choices** in an increasingly complex global environment. During the Q&A session, questions were posed on diplomatic strategies, US-China relations, and the qualities future leaders will need to navigate the rapidly changing world order.

The Perdana Discourse Series is organised by **Perdana Leadership Foundation** and is sponsored by **DRB-HICOM Berhad**. The discourse monograph will be published in 2026.

Malaysia Needs to be Analytical and Strategic in Its Foreign Policy Decisions: Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid

An Excerpt from the Perdana Discourse Series 25 Keynote Address "Malaysia Amidst a Changing Global Order: Challenges, Choices & Opportunities"

At the 25th Perdana Discourse Series held on 5th November 2025, **Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid**, Chairman of CARI ASEAN and Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre for International Affairs, Diplomacy and Strategy, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), explored how Malaysia can remain resilient and relevant amid shifting geopolitical and economic dynamics. In this excerpt, he highlights the importance of Malaysia being able to think for itself and develop a sound strategic response to global (dis)orders.

EXCERPT:

*"We must think with clarity, apply sound intellect, interact and organise our thoughts, and remain objective, rather than merely seeking to ingratiate ourselves with our political superiors. **Ultimately, our task is to determine what is best for Malaysia** — to discern the Malaysian national interest against the backdrop of a world marked by disorder.*

I would like to revisit what I previously wrote about this global disorder. President Trump's tariffs and his conduct of US foreign policy were widely viewed as tearing apart the global order that had been in place, many would say, since 1945. Yet the truth is that the global order had already begun to break down even before Trump.

Is Trump an amplification of, or a deviation from, a world losing its values and morality, where the structures of stability and law were already under strain? What were the early signs, the sources, and the causes of the global order's disintegration before Trump? And now, with "Trump 2.0", what greater calamities have been visited upon us?

Where does the world stand today? What choices are being made, and what choices remain open to us? Some still hope for a return to the status quo ante after Trump; others insist that the die is already cast. In any case, we are entering a changed world. What will it look like? How different will it be from what we know today? Will it be better, or worse?

*I pose these questions because **I have said that we must cultivate fine intellect — to think, to analyse, and to organise our thoughts for the good of our country.**"*

The keynote address will be published in full in our upcoming PDS 25 monograph.



Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid has had an accomplished career in journalism, finance, and regional economic advocacy. He is Chairman of CARI ASEAN Research and Advocacy (CARI), Chairman of the Institute for Capital Market Research Malaysia (ICMR), and President of the ASEAN Business Club. He previously served as Chairman of Bank Muamalat, founding Chairman of the Securities Commission, Executive Chairman of CIMB, and Group Editor of the New Straits Times. A strong advocate for deeper ASEAN economic integration, he also sits on several advisory boards, including those of EUROCHAM Malaysia and the KSI Institute for Asia Pacific. Tan Sri Dr Munir is an Honorary Fellow of the London School of Economics, where he earned his PhD in International Relations.

Panellists Share Views on ASEAN and Malaysia-China Relations

At the 25th Perdana Discourse Series, panellists responded to the keynote address and the discourse theme to share their insights on how the nation can strategically navigate major power rivalries and adopt a consistent foreign policy to secure its place in tomorrow's world.



Dr Azmi Hassan, Senior Fellow at the Nusantara Academy and Fellow of the National Council of Professors, reflected on the complex relationship between ASEAN members and China:

“ASEAN does not always speak with a unified voice. I believe this is why Tan Sri Munir Majid pointed out that the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea has taken 15 years to finalise, with China taking advantage of the situation. Some ASEAN members tend to lean towards China, while others, along with several other Asian countries, adopt a “pretend not to know” approach. This divergence makes progress difficult. The South China Sea issue remains particularly challenging because of the involvement and entanglement of major powers.”

Dr Ngeow Chow Bing, Associate Professor and Director of the Institute of China Studies at the University of Malaya, contrasted Malaysia’s MOUs with China against that with the US.

“The joint statements and MOUs between Malaysia and China have been largely symbolic, emphasising broad cooperation and a “community with a shared future” but lacking concrete, action-based commitments. In contrast, agreements with the United States are specific, enforceable, and reflect clear obligations. While Malaysia–China relations are often portrayed as on the rise, most of these statements do not require either side to take action beyond existing practices, highlighting the stark difference in substance and impact between the two sets of agreements.”



Mr Ismail Adnan, News Anchor and Presenter at Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM), who moderated the panel session, reiterated Tan Sri Dr Munir’s point that sovereignty extends beyond protecting borders to safeguarding Malaysia’s freedom to chart its own course.

“Let us reflect on Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid’s reminder that sovereignty is not merely about borders, but about the freedom to determine our own path. Malaysia’s challenge today is to uphold that freedom while engaging constructively with all partners, East and West alike. The choices we make now will define our nation’s place in tomorrow’s global order.”

◆ The panel session, including Q & A, will be published in full in our upcoming PDS25 monograph.



Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack, Trustee of Perdana Leadership Foundation, delivering the welcome remarks.



Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid, Chairman of CARI ASEAN and Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre for International Affairs, Diplomacy and Strategy, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), delivering his keynote address.

“Our decisions must be made based on Malaysia’s national interests — not on external pressures.”
- Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid



Panel session in progress. From left to right: Mr Ismail Adnan (moderator), Dr Ngeow Chow Bing, and Dr Azmi Hassan.



From left to right: Mr Ismail Adnan, News Anchor and Presenter, Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM); Dato' Seri Dr Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack, Trustee, Perdana Leadership Foundation; Encik Cairil Irwan Amir, Chief Communication Officer, DRB-HICOM Berhad; Puan Zarina Abu Bakar, CEO, Perdana Leadership Foundation; Dr Azmi Hassan, Senior Fellow, Nusantara Academy and Fellow of the National Council of Professors; and Dr Ngeow Chow Bing, Associate Professor and Director of the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya



Participants posing questions to the speaker and panellists.

Integrity as a Way of Life: A Conversation with Tan Sri Ambrin Buang

Many years have passed since our first conversation with former Auditor-General, **Tan Sri Dato' Setia Haji Ambrin Buang** and we thought it would be timely to get his current views on issues related to governance and transparency, especially in public service.

With this in mind, Perdana Leadership Foundation conducted an Oral History session with Tan Sri Ambrin on 10th September 2025. Led by **Tuan Haji Ahmad Zakie Ahmad Shariff**, Chairman of Sorento Capital Bhd and Adjunct Professor at the Graduate School of Business,

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, the conversation centred, among others, on Tan Sri Ambrin's views on corruption, the challenges of implementing reforms, and his upcoming book, "Auditing the 1MDB – My Story". Tan Sri shared his views, drawn upon his nearly five-decades of experience in government service which included eleven years as the country's Auditor-General, auditing government finances.

The Oral History conversations will be published in 2026. Below are highlights from the most recent dialogue.



Tan Sri Ambrin during the conversation.

“For reforms to succeed, there must be political will, but also a change in mindset within the public service — where integrity is embraced as a personal value, not just a compliance requirement. When civil servants understand that their decisions impact millions of Malaysians, they will naturally act with greater responsibility.”

Tan Sri Ambrin Buang



Tan Sri Ambrin Buang and Tuan Haji Ahmad Zakie Ahmad Sharif.



Puan Zarina, and PLF's Communications team with Tan Sri Ambrin at Kelab Shah Alam, Selangor.

LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE:

Mr Ahmad Zakie Shariff (AZS):

Tan Sri, what were the core values that guided you during your service in the public sector?

Tan Sri Haji Ambrin Buang (TSAB):

I began serving the Government in 1971, and over the years I accumulated 34 years of service before my first compulsory retirement. I was then reappointed on contract as the Auditor General for another 11 years. Later, when **Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad** returned as Prime Minister in 2018, he asked me to lead the Special Investigation Committee on Governance, Procurement, and Finance.

So altogether, my service spans nearly 50 years. And throughout those five decades, the principle that guided me was the belief that as **government servants, our primary duty is to the rakyat**. The Government exists to serve them, and everything we do must bring value to our stakeholders. *Berkhidmat untuk negara* is deeply rooted in my moral values.

For example, moral values such as honesty and trustworthiness are fundamental. Without them, one may easily be distracted by things that prevent us from giving our best. In the spirit of *berkhidmat untuk negara*, I strongly believe in the guiding principles introduced by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the civil service — *Bersih, Cekap dan Amanah* (BCA). *Bersih* means being free from improper activities, *Cekap* means having mastery of your responsibilities and *Amanah* is performing your job with integrity.

Mastery of one's job comes from acquiring the right skills, the right knowledge, and the right attitude. Civil servants should not be there for the money; they should be there to serve the nation. That is the true spirit of public service.

When we talk about moral values like honesty and trustworthiness, they are closely linked to being religiously grounded and God-fearing. These values shape your attitude and your conduct. **Ultimately, you want your ending to be as honourable as your beginning.**

ANTI-CORRUPTION & MACC:

AZS:

You have been in government service since 1971 until your retirement. Over the years, we have also seen the evolution of Badan Pencegah Rasuah (BPR) into Suruhanjaya Pencegah Rasuah Malaysia (SPRM), or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC). In your view, have the changes resulted in reduced corruption in Malaysia?

TSAB:

I would refrain from commenting in detail as I may not have the latest information. However, I believe that given current concerns and developments, the MACC are doing their best.

When it comes to corruption, fraud, and leakages, there are those who say there is nothing to worry about, that everything is under control. But there are also people who are genuinely concerned, as they believe the situation is worsening.

Why do I say this? Several factors point in that (negative) direction. Apart from our stagnant Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranking, we also hear strong statements from national leaders. For instance, the **Sultan of Perak** has described corruption in Malaysia as cancerous—and as we know, cancer spreads. Similarly, the current Prime Minister, **Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim**, has openly stated that corruption in Malaysia is systemic¹.

AZS:

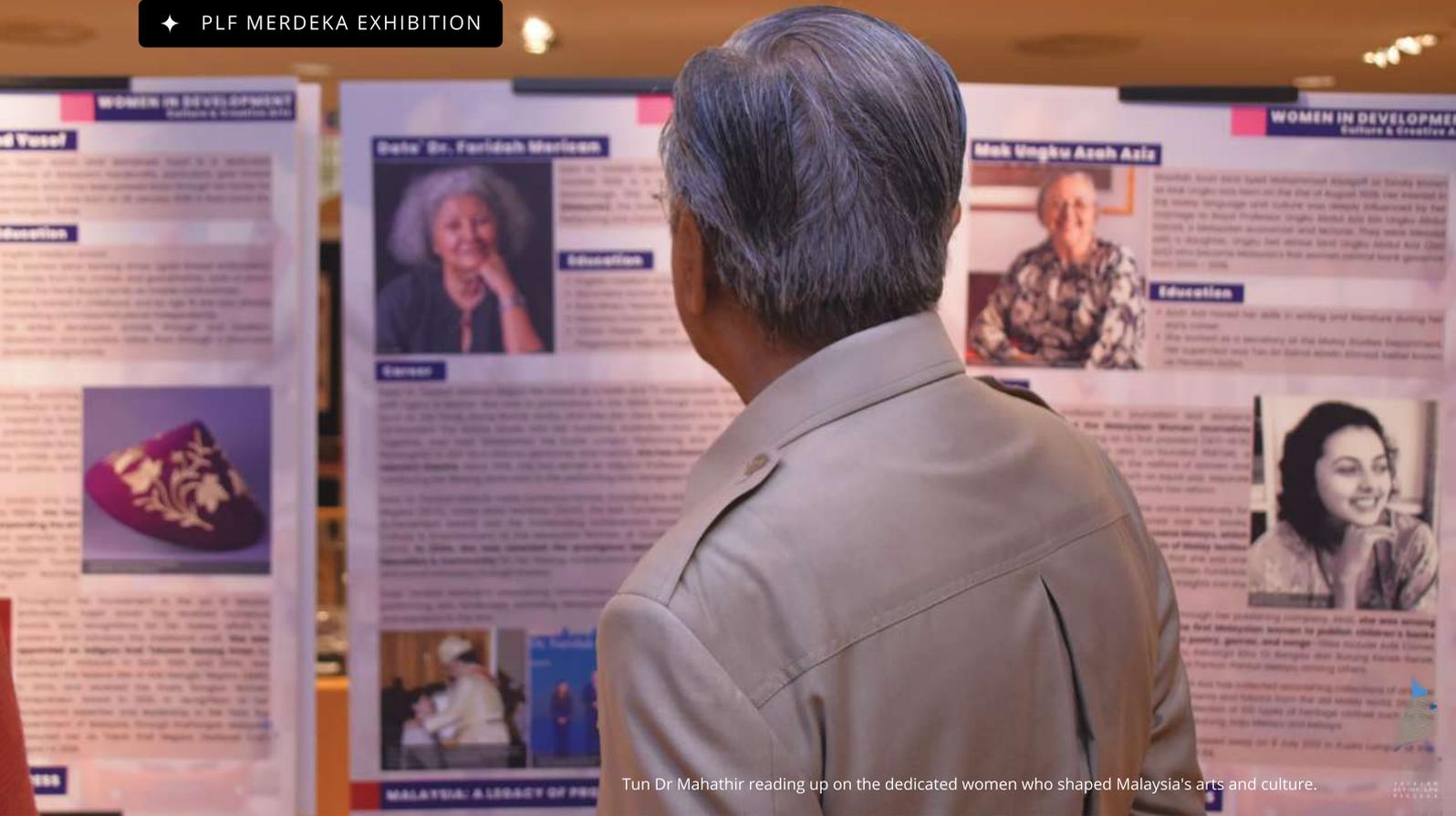
And what would be your comment on the enforcement side?

TSAB:

On the enforcement side, **there is always a gap between rhetoric and harsh realities**. When you talk about fraud, corruption, and the role of government, we realise that most of the time, what is said is not what happens in real life.

We are talking about reality vs perception. You have your perception; I have my perception. You asked me what my perception is about the current state of fraud and corruption, and I think it is becoming more serious. Corruption seems to be everywhere; in the military, in the private sector, and even bankers are now being arrested.

1. *The Edge Markets*. (2023, February 14). *MACC to focus on larger-scale graft cases as corruption now systemic, says Anwar*.



Tun Dr Mahathir reading up on the dedicated women who shaped Malaysia's arts and culture.

A Legacy of Progress: From Independence to Advancement

Building upon the success of the first Merdeka Exhibition, Perdana Leadership Foundation held a second Merdeka Exhibition in 2025, this time to showcase the nation's transformation from an agricultural third-world nation to a modern industrialised economy. The Exhibition, **Malaysia: A Legacy of Progress: From Independence to Advancement**, was held at our premise in Putrajaya from 15th August to 30th September and ran concurrently with the Centennial Celebration Exhibition on Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad (page 12).

The Merdeka Exhibition 2025 was more expansive in scope, featuring infographics and photographs that tell the fascinating story of our country's economic growth, infrastructure development, and global achievements. Malaysia's remarkable success is due to its people, and

the exhibition also showcased the women who played key roles in our nation building. Visitors could also watch a slice of history in video, as short documentaries on the road to Independence as well as Malaysia's economic journey were aired.

Visitors also took part in a range of activities, including the weekly **Guess the Number of Pages Contest**, and the **Merdeka Quiz**. Many pinned their dreams for Malaysia on our Hope for Malaysia board, which also featured a short message by former Prime Minister **Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad**.

Thank you to the hundreds of visitors who visited the Exhibition and look out for the third edition of Merdeka Exhibition in 2026!



School students touring the Merdeka Exhibition.



Our Hope for Malaysia Board was a hit among visitors.



It looks easy, but even avid readers found this challenging!



Puan Zarina Abu Bakar accompanying Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad through the Merdeka Exhibition.



The Merdeka Exhibition 2025 featured informative visuals on Malaysia's economic progress, key national milestones, and women in development.

Malaysia's Leadership in Times of Crisis Explored at the Merdeka Dialogue



Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad standing with (from left to right) Mr Eddin Khoo, Founder of PUSAKA; PLF CEO Puan Zarina Abu Bakar; Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar, former Cabinet Minister; Datuk A. Kadir Jasin, National Journalist Figure; PLF Adviser Tan Sri Nik Mohamed Nik Yaacob; and Professor Dato' Dr Sivamurugan Pandian, Lecturer at the School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Every nation, including Malaysia, will have its own set of crises, and how successfully it navigates through troubled waters would depend on the quality of the nation's leadership. These were the concurring opinions of the keynote speaker and panellists at the second Merdeka Dialogue that took place on 27 August 2025 at the PLF Auditorium in Putrajaya. Themed, **"Malaysia's Leadership in Times of Crisis"** or **"Kepimpinan Malaysia dalam Menghadapi Krisis"**, the programme discussed definitions of crises as well as the type of leadership that is needed to drive nations forward.

Attended by academics, university students, and members of the public, the event began with welcoming remarks by PLF Chief Executive Officer, **Puan Zarina Abu Bakar**. She noted that Malaysia has faced numerous challenges throughout its history, from the Konfrontasi and communist insurgency to the 13 May tragedy, the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, and more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. "Today, we continue to confront issues such as rising living costs, regional competition, and global geopolitical uncertainty. Each challenge tests the strength of our national leadership. Yet, from every

“Kenapa kita perlu berbicara mengenai bendera (Jalur Gemilang) apabila mempertahankan soal kemerdekaan? Ini kerana bendera itu simbol utama kemerdekaan. Apabila mana-mana negara mencapai kemerdekaan, antara perkara pertama yang perlu dilakukan ialah membuat bendera baru.”

- Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad

crisis, we gain invaluable lessons in vision, strategy, and the courage to make difficult decisions for the sake of stability and sovereignty,” she said.

The panel session featured three distinguished speakers: **Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar**, **Datuk A Kadir Jasin**, and **Professor Dato’ Dr Sivamurugan Pandian**. As moderator, **Mr Eddin Khoo** guided the conversation through analyses of past and present national crises, drawing attention to the qualities that define effective leadership.

Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid emphasised the importance of understanding the true nature of a crisis to ensure an effective response. He described a crisis as **an extraordinary, sudden event that disrupts the stability of a nation, organisation, or society** — demanding swift action, decisive leadership, and clear communication. Crises, he explained, may be internal, such as institutional integrity issues or political conflict, or external, such as pandemics, geopolitical tensions, or global economic shocks. **“In every crisis, the defining factor between a nation’s rise or fall is the quality of its leadership.** Leaders must

be capable, courageous, and visionary to minimise damage and restore public and international confidence,” he stressed.

Reflecting on his early experience as a journalist just a month after the 13 May 1969 incident, **Datuk A Kadir Jasin** noted that **every Prime Minister had their own approach to managing crises.** He shared several observations on how Malaysia’s first five premiers handled the pressures of their respective eras. “One of the theses about the May 13 incident is that it was not solely caused by political differences. It escalated due to other factors, particularly

the economic disparities that existed at the time,” he noted, underscoring the complex layers of national crises.

Meanwhile, **Professor Dato’ Dr Sivamurugan** highlighted the clear distinction between a leadership turmoil and a leadership crisis, two concepts often misunderstood by the public. A leadership turmoil, he explained, involves instability and uncertainty, yet the political system and government machinery continue to function. A leadership crisis, however, occurs when circumstances become so severe that they threaten the legitimacy of the government, the effectiveness of institutions, and the confidence of both citizens and the international community. He added, **“A crisis is a turning point where decisions must be made.** This country itself was born out of crisis — when our leaders agreed to disagree, compromised, and sacrificed to lay the foundation for independence.”

Mr Eddin Khoo, a former journalist, reminded the audience that a day without crisis is often considered a day without news, yet he emphasised that overall, Malaysia has navigated crises relatively well compared with other countries.



Tun Dr Mahathir sharing his personal experiences and insights during his Closing Keynote speech.



Full house

The highlight of the Dialogue was the Closing Keynote address by none other than former Prime Minister, **YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad**. In his speech, he remarked that Malaysia's journey to Independence was not as smooth sailing as many Malaysians seem to think. There were many Malaysians who sacrificed themselves to ensure that Malaya became free of colonial rule, from early nationalists resisting Portuguese rule to the struggles against the British, so Malaysians must not take our sovereignty lightly. Tun Dr Mahathir also underscored **the importance of honouring national symbols**



The Q&A session was moderated by Mr Eddin Khoo.

“Jika kita dapat menghayati kemerdekaan, kita pasti sedar bahawa ianya membentuk satu jiwa yang bebas. Dari sebuah jiwa yang bebas, kita akan dapat membina sebuah kehidupan mengikut acuan kita tanpa perlu dikongkong oleh mereka yang tidak peduli mengenai nasib mahupun masa depan kita.”

- Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad

such as the national flag or **Jalur Gemilang**, which embody the spirit of independence. “Before Merdeka, we were forced to stand before a foreign flag. Today, we should stand willingly for our own. At the very least, fly our flag properly, otherwise, it is an insult to those who fought for our freedom,” he asserted. He later engaged with participants in a question-and-answer session moderated by Mr Eddin Khoo.

Following the dialogue, **Tun Dr Mahathir** visited the two exhibitions held at the Perdana Leadership Foundation; the **Merdeka**

Exhibition “Malaysia: A Legacy of Progress: From Independence to Advancement” showcased key themes such as strategic vision, economic development, national infrastructure, Malaysia's global standing, and women's empowerment, while **“The Centennial Celebration”** was held to commemorate Tun Dr Mahathir's 100th birthday in July. Beyond showcasing Malaysia's achievements and historical milestones, the exhibition served as an educational space for younger generations to better understand and appreciate the nation's development and leadership legacy.



"Yes, you in the back row. What is your question?"



Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar



Datuk A Kadir Jasin



Professor Dato' Dr Sivamurugan



"Glad our turn is over. Now let's listen to Tun."



"To answer your question..."



Audience members taking notes during the speech by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia.



Eager participants asking their questions.



Puan Sri Sharifah Aziah Ben Yahya and Puan Sharifah Nurzaima Albar.



Our Honorary President is never too busy for a quick selfie with fans.



Applying the ten essential tips

Capturing Moments: An Interactive Mobile Photography Workshop

Over the two-hour workshop, participants were guided through **ten essential tips** for capturing better images using a mobile phone, including finding good lighting, activating grid lines, stabilising the device, adding on external lenses, and improving audio quality for video recordings. The session also included insights into manual camera controls such as ISO, shutter speed, focus, white balance, and exposure compensation. A key highlight of the workshop was the exploration of **composition techniques**, including the Rule of Thirds, Golden Ratio, Diagonal Composition, Golden Spiral, and reflections — allowing participants to understand how creative framing can elevate their photographs.



Mr Salim Dom.

Mr Salim was a lively teacher and incorporated **an extensive practical session** where attendees got to practise what they learned, applying the techniques and composition rules shared by the facilitator with their own camera phones. As a bonus, Mr Salim reviewed each and every photo when the class reconvened for the final session, so every participant got additional tips and insights from a master photographer.

Photos are part of our archives at **Perdana Leadership Foundation**, and among our extensive collection are photos taken by people who happened to be on the scene. With camera phones becoming more sophisticated, it's possible for anyone today to capture a person, a landscape, and a moment of history in visual form, and create their own visual archives.

It was a fun and interactive workshop where participants obtained useful, real-time feedback on their photography skills.

As part of the Merdeka Exhibition, the Perdana Leadership Foundation hosted a **Basic Mobile Photography Workshop**, conducted by **Mr Salim Dom**, a professional photographer, on 20th September 2025. This workshop was open to the public and drew around twenty-five enthusiastic budding photographers eager to enhance their photography skills.



Mr Salim Dom sharing tips and techniques.

Enhancing Information Access: Delving into Library of Congress Subject Headings at the Perdana Library Workshop



Puan Hamidah delivering her lecture.



Laser focused.

The Perdana Library successfully organised a **Workshop on Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)** Scheme for Libraries and Information Centres from 5th to 7th May 2025 at Perdana Leadership Foundation. The programme brought together librarians, cataloguers, assistant librarians, students, and information professionals from both public and private institutions.

Facilitated by **Puan Hamidah A. Rahman**, former lecturer at UiTM's Faculty of Information Management, the workshop offered participants comprehensive training in **cataloguing rules, subject analysis, and the application of the Library of Congress Subject Headings** in cataloguing and classification work.

During the 3-day workshop, participants explored the fundamentals of controlled vocabularies, principles of subject cataloguing, MARC 21 coding, and the functions, structure, and syntax of LCSH main headings and subdivisions. The programme combined theoretical inputs with extensive hands-on exercises, allowing participants to practise assigning subject headings, understanding cross-references, and applying form, topical, chronological, and geographic subdivisions using MARC subfields. The workshop concluded with

group presentations, showcasing the participants' applications of the LCSH scheme.

The workshop was a valuable platform for capacity building, professional development, and knowledge sharing among librarians and information practitioners, reinforcing the importance of accurate subject cataloguing in enhancing access to information. More workshops will be organised in 2026, so follow us on Facebook (Perdana Leadership Foundation) to be updated.



Checking the participant's work!

A Deep Dive into Crisis, Courage, and Economic Resilience

This year, the Perdana Leadership Foundation welcomed **Dr Marie-Aimée Tourres**, an international economist and development expert as well as author of **“The Tragedy That Didn't Happen: Malaysia's Crisis Management and Capital Controls”**, to co-produce with us an in-depth economic series on the 1997-98 Asian Financial Crisis and Malaysia's response for our upcoming online resource hub, **Perdana Insights**.

A former Senior Fellow of the Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) who benefited from the mentorship and supervision of the late **Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee**, former CEO of ISIS, Dr Marie unpacked the complexities of the Asian Financial Crisis and offered an economist's examination of its origins, impact, and Malaysia's unorthodox decision. It helped that she has been living in Malaysia for over twenty-five years and



Dr Marie-Aimée all ready to begin the recording of the series.



PLF CEO Puan Zarina Abu Bakar with Dr Marie-Aimée.

thus has local knowledge of its leaders and institutions throughout the period. **This series combines theory and application, concepts and real-world scenarios to anyone who wants to understand economic concepts and policymaking.**

In retracing Malaysia's path, Dr. Marie highlighted the pivotal role of national leadership, especially during moments when global confidence was crumbling.

"Unlike Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea, which turned to the IMF, Malaysia chose its own path driven by **Prime Minister (Tun) Mahathir (Mohamad)**'s vision of safeguarding national sovereignty... Behind the scenes, Dr Mahathir was formulating a strategic plan while his Deputy (**Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim**) was announcing measures to manage the mounting daily challenges."

The series will cover both macro and micro-economic perspectives of the Asian Financial Crisis, parsing through each step of the decision-making process as well as the measures that were taken. Through the series, finance and economics professionals, policymakers, as well as business leaders can deepen their understanding of the crisis that almost unravelled our economy, and gain a wealth of leadership and economic insights.

The online series will be made available in the latter half of 2026.

"In a financial crisis, banks face two battles—liquidity to survive today and solvency to last tomorrow... distinguishing between liquidity shortage and fundamental solvency risk is critical because they can lead to significantly different effective crisis interventions."

- Dr Marie-Aimee Tourres



Dr Marie-Aimee Tourres's career spans over fifteen years in higher education leadership and global economic research. Holding a PhD in Economics, Dr Marie is widely recognised for her work on Asian economies—with a particular focus on Malaysia and Singapore—and for her expertise in foresight, scenario planning, futures thinking, and curriculum development. Beyond academia, she also volunteers extensively in community capacity-building and humanitarian initiatives, reflecting her deep commitment to societal progress.



Mr Sajeet Soudagar (right) and author Edham Kaizer.

From Leadership Wisdom to Historical Imagination

A Recap of PLF's 2025 Book Talks

When author **Edham Kaizer** asked audiences to imagine *“what might have happened if the walls of Melaka had never fallen?”* it sparked an engaging discussion on history and a lively exploration of “What-If”, proving the adage that reading transports minds.

So, too, do discussions on reading, and the **Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF) Book Talk Series 2025** explored themes of leadership, history, and the changing social landscape of Malaysia through its hosting of Malaysian authors. Through these sessions, PLF seeks not only to promote the habit of reading but also to spark intellectual discussions.

The first session, held on 17 April 2025, spotlighted **Leadership is Ssshhh...** by **Puan Syireen Rose**. Moderated by **Dr Hamidah Mohd Salleh**, the session explained the author’s unique approach to leadership, emphasising self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and the often-unspoken elements that shape effective

leaders. One key insight she shared was the concept of **“quiet leadership”**. She clarified that quietness in leadership is not about passivity, but about heightened awareness — of oneself, of others, and of the broader impact of decisions. In her view, true leadership is not about domination but about active listening, reflection, and creating meaningful outcomes through service.

Ms Syireen further emphasised that **leadership should not be pursued for personal gain but embraced as a responsibility that impacts others**. Leaders, she stressed, must understand that success comes not just from “winning” but also from continuous learning — a mindset shift she passionately advocates in her book.

The second session, conducted on 30 September 2025, featured **Tuan Haji Ahmad Zakie Shariff**, author of **If the Walls of Melaka Should Crumble** under his pen name **Edham Kaizer**. The session was moderated by **Mr Sajeet Soudagar**, a publisher at Storyme Books and Media Services, and was conducted as a hybrid event held at PLF and streamed live on Facebook. The discussion delved into the historical themes, creative inspirations, and narrative foundations behind the book.

Mr Ahmad Zakie shared how the novel was inspired by **Melaka's turbulent past and the enduring legacies of its political, cultural, and maritime history**. He highlighted the importance of reimagining historical moments not only as records of the past but as lessons for contemporary society.

The third and final talk, held on 18th December 2025, featured **Puan Muniraa Abu Bakar** and **Tuan Syed Abd Aziz Al Qubro**, both authors of *100 Pesan Tun: Membina Keluarga dan Bangsa*.

Tuan Syed emphasised that **Tun Dr Mahathir** is often viewed narrowly through a political lens, while his deeper spiritual and intellectual leadership remain largely unexplored. He argued that Tun's leadership is rooted in discipline, rational thinking, self-control, and service to society. Puan Muniraa explained that the book aims to build a **framework of thinking** that bridges the gap between religion, intellect, and daily life.

The session also explored how Tun's critiques of Malay society were constructive rather than dismissive, aimed at encouraging **progress, innovation, and critical thinking**. According to the authors, Tun's worldview challenged

inherited colonial mindsets and called for the development of independent, forward-thinking scholars and leaders.

The discussion concluded that Tun's leadership principles are timeless, offering lessons even for young people to cultivate critical, balanced, and disciplined minds.

Writing a book is never easy and the PLF Book Talk Series serve to showcase the Malaysians who have successfully published, and to highlight the insights that can be gleaned from each book. If you would like to nominate a Malaysian author for our consideration, send an e-mail to library@perdana.org.my. We feature books that focus on leadership, history, nation-building, and economic development.



Tuan Haji Ahmad Zakie Shariff (Edham Kaizer) signing copies of his book for readers and supporters.



Behind the scenes.



Puan Syireen Rose sharing her insights on quiet leadership.



Dr Hamidah Mohd Salleh moderating the first book talk of the year.



Puan Muniraa Abu Bakar explaining how "100 Pesan Tun" was conceptualised.

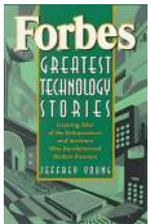


Tuan Syed Abd Aziz Al Qubro delivering his insights on Tun Mahathir's leadership approach.

Staff Selections from the Library Shelves

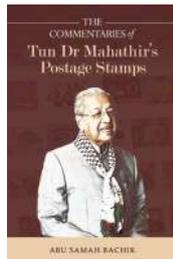
What We Read in 2025

What is life without books? It would certainly be much less enriching for the staff at Perdana Leadership Foundation who enjoy good reads that spark ideas, provoke thought, and inspire reflection. After all, reading is a fulfilling pursuit — whether it transports us to new places or broadens our understanding. In this edition of The Reading Room (formerly PLF Staff Picks), we are delighted to present a collection of the staff's favourite titles from the past year.



Our January book recommendation comes from **Mr Faridzuan Abd Rahman**: **Forbes Greatest Technology Stories**. The book recounts the invention of the modern transistor by William Shockley, John Bardeen, and Walter Brattain, highlighting how Bardeen and Brattain's scepticism about electron behaviour led them to create the first point-contact transistor in 1947, while Shockley later improved it with the junction transistor. From this story, the key lessons are the importance of **questioning existing ideas and the value of perseverance** when faced with setbacks.

If you're looking for non-fiction rooted in real experiences, **Ms Magdalena Lampas** recommends

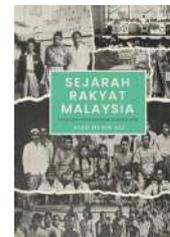


The Commentaries of Tun Dr Mahathir's Postage Stamps by **Abu Samah Bachik** which explores Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad's leadership by examining around 583 postage stamps issued during his tenure as Prime Minister from 1981 to 2003. The author relates his personal anecdotes of Malaysia's former Prime Minister to the stamps that celebrate key national milestones, diplomatic achievements, and Malaysia's image on the global stage.

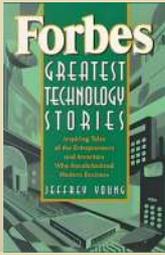


Ms Qistina Ainaa Mohd Fadli found **The New Harvest** by **Calestous Juma** both inspiring and eye-opening, noting how the author combines solid research with optimism to show that agriculture can drive innovation, industrialisation, and inclusive growth. What stood out most to her was Juma's emphases on pairing technology with local

knowledge, encouraging African nations to lead their own progress through education, science, and policy reform rather than relying on external solutions. The book remains relevant today as issues of food security and sustainability continue to shape global priorities, reminding readers that **agricultural innovation is not only about feeding people but also about building systems that support livelihoods** and create long-term opportunities.



In deference to Hari Malaysia, the September book recommendation by **Ms Hasniza Hashim** highlights **Sejarah Rakyat Malaysia** by **Syed Husin Ali**, a work that offers a critical perspective on Malaysian history by emphasising the **struggles and contributions of ordinary people** that are often overlooked in mainstream narratives. Syed Husin Ali challenges the traditional elite-centred view of history, encouraging readers to rethink the meaning of independence and nation-building. The book is not only an historical account but also a reminder of the daily sacrifices of the ordinary rakyat, past and present. It provides a thought-provoking and people-centred narrative of Malaysia's history.



JANUARY

Mohd Faridzuan Abd Rahman
Forbes Greatest Technology Stories



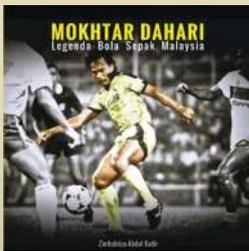
FEBRUARY

Roymax Sebastian Abdullah
Dialog: Thoughts on Tunku's Timeless Thinking



MARCH

Adnan Haris
Rapid-Fire Rafidah: Being Malaysian First



APRIL

Nurul Humaira Kamarulzaman
Mokhtar Dahari: Legenda Bola Sepak Malaysia



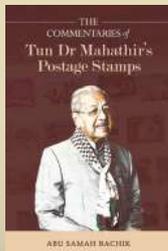
MAY

Maizatul Kartini Kamaruddin
Tun Abdul Razak: Bapa Pembangunan – Suatu Pengkisahan



JUNE

Suriyana Mohd Noor
Malapetaka Iklim: Memahami Fenomena Pemanasan Dunia



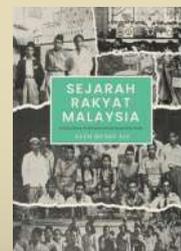
JULY

Magdalena Lampas
The Commentaries of Tun Dr Mahathir's Postage Stamps



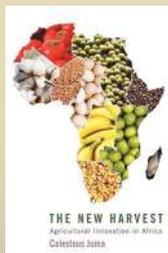
AUGUST

Siti Murshidah Mat Riffin
Imbasan Peristiwa-peristiwa Sebelum Kemerdekaan Malaya



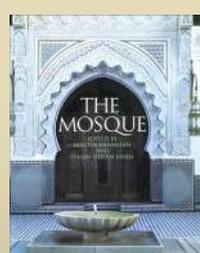
SEPTEMBER

Hasniza Hashim
Sejarah Rakyat Malaysia



OCTOBER

Nur Qistina Ainaa Mohd Fadli
The New Harvest: Agricultural Innovation in Africa



NOVEMBER

Muizzuddin Munir
The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity

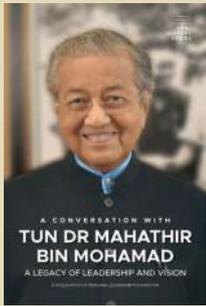


DECEMBER

Wan Nur Atiela Wan Razali
Perpustakaan dan Perkembangan Tamadun

Our Latest Publications

Check out our latest publications. These books are available directly from PLF — call 03-8885 8961 (Library Counter), email plfcomms@perdana.org.my, or find them at selected bookstores in the Klang Valley.



A Conversation with Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad: A Legacy of Leadership and Vision

Publication Year: **2025**

ISBN:

Softcover: 978-967-0821-43-6

Hardcover: 978-967-0821-45-0

Price:

Softcover: **RM49.90**

Hardcover: **RM 85.00**

Book Synopsis:

This publication offers an exploration of the vision, strategies, and policies that guided Malaysia's transformation into one of Southeast Asia's most dynamic economies. Through a series of candid conversations with Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, Malaysia's longest-serving and twice-elected Prime Minister who steered the nation through its modernisation and transformation in the 1980s and 1990s, readers will gain deeper insights into Malaysia's development journey as well as its challenges, past, and current. Tun Dr Mahathir also shares his insights on other crucial topics, including corruption, ethnic relations, leadership, as well as regional and global issues. This book provides a deep understanding of the thoughts, leadership, and legacy of Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad.



Perdana Discourse Series 24: "Balancing Economic Growth with Social Equity in Malaysia: Building an Equitable and Prosperous Future" featuring Keynote Address by Dr Nungsari Radhi, Chairman of Khazanah Research Institute, Malaysia (Softcover)

Publication Year: **2025**

ISBN: 978-967-0821-46-7

Price: **RM35.00**

Book Synopsis:

This publication compiles the keynote and panel proceedings of the 24th Perdana Discourse Series "Balancing Economic Growth with Social Equity in Malaysia: Building an Equitable and Prosperous Future" which took place on 14th November 2024. The discourse featured Dr Nungsari Ahmad Radhi, Chairman of the Khazanah Research Institute & Member of the Policy Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister, as Keynote Speaker, and panellists Professor Datuk Dr Norma Mansor, Director, Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC), Universiti Malaya, Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid, Chief Economist, Bank Muamalat Malaysia Berhad, and Ms Syalin Koh, Research, Design and Impact Manager, Teach For Malaysia.

Books and Merchandise @ PLF

Perdana Leadership Foundation publishes and sells a range of books on leadership, history, and national issues, as well as exclusive PLF merchandise. These publications can be purchased directly from the Foundation by contacting Ms Magdalena Lampas at 03-8885 8961 or via email at library@perdana.org.my or plfcomms@perdana.org.my. A selection of the books available includes:



Perdana Leadership Foundation Oral History Series: A Conversation with Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
RM29.90



Jejak Seorang Pemimpin : Sejarah Lisan Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
Hardcover: RM50.00
Paperback: RM20.00



The Future of Islamic Banking in the Global Market
 Author: Abdul Ghafar Ismail
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
RM75.00



Jejak Seorang Pemimpin : Sejarah Lisan Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
Hardcover: RM50.00
Paperback: RM20.00



Perdana Discourse Series Keynote Speeches by Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad 2nd Edition (Hardcover)
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
RM60.00



Perdana Discourse Series 23: "The Power of Youth: Building a Better Future in the Face of Economic and Environmental Challenges"
 Publisher: Perdana Leadership Foundation (PLF)
RM35.00



1. Special Edition Notecard Featuring Original Artwork by Datuk Lat **RM35.00**
2. Framed Special Edition Notecard Featuring Original Artwork by Datuk Lat with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Signature **RM75.00**
3. Exclusive PLF Tumbler **RM25.00**
4. Exclusive PLF Canvas Bag (Black) **RM25.00**
5. Magnetic PLF Bookmark **RM8.00**
6. Pop Art PLF T-Shirt (various sizes, from S to XXXL) **RM33.00**
7. PLF Umbrella (Small) **RM27.00**
8. PLF Gel Pen **RM4.00**
9. PLF Cardholder **RM15.00**



Perdana Leadership Foundation was established in January 2003 with the aim of preserving, researching, and disseminating materials by and on Malaysia's past Prime Ministers as well as events connected to them, with particular emphasis on the policies, strategies, and initiatives they adopted. Premised on the belief that past leadership can yield valuable insights for present and future development, the Foundation's objective is to increase awareness and appreciation of Malaysia's history and leadership legacy.

The Foundation's physical home in Precinct 8, Putrajaya, was completed in October 2003. The stately building now houses the Perdana Library, an auditorium as well as a multi-purpose hall in addition to the office of the Foundation's Honorary President who is the country's fourth and seventh Prime Minister, YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad.

The Foundation operates the Perdana Library which houses 12,000 physical titles and more than 290,000 digital documents, including speeches, policy papers, and articles.

The Foundation's objectives are:

- To research, document, disseminate, and publicise the intellectual legacies of Malaysia's past Prime Ministers.
- To create awareness of the development process of the nation and draw lessons from the nation's history to enhance future development
- To illuminate the contributions of Malaysia's past Prime Ministers in the social, economic, and political development of the nation.
- To be a resource centre of policies, strategies, and initiatives that were adopted under Malaysia's various Prime Ministers which may be used and adapted as models for the development of other nations.

The Foundation also has a broader objective which is to promote global understanding by providing a channel for scholars and thinkers to undertake research and idea-sharing for lasting, peaceful resolutions.

WWW.PERDANA.ORG.MY



The Perdana Leadership Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees representing the following corporations:





PLF MEMBERSHIP



Launched on 29th April 2004 by Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, the Perdana Library is a research library set up to support Perdana Leadership Foundation's core activities by providing information and references on Malaysia's leadership's history for local and international researchers as well as the Malaysian public.

Membership to our Perdana Library grants you access to our collection as well as our in-house facilities. Membership starts from RM10 per year:

- a. Annual Membership - RM10 per year
- b. 3-year Membership - RM25 every 3 years (members will receive a PLF non-woven bag & pen)
- c. 5-year Membership - RM42 every 5 years (members will receive a PLF canvas bag and pen)

Why Become a Member?

- a. Physical Library Access
- b. Discounts for Books and exclusive Merchandise
- c. Hassle-free book borrowing
- d. Exclusive Discounts to PLF Programmes

For more info, contact our librarians at 03-8885 8961, or email library@perdana.org.my

EVENT SPACE



The Perdana Leadership Foundation houses venue spaces that can cater for small meetings of 20 people to a lecture for 150. For more information on venue space rentals, please contact Ms

Maizatul Kartini (03-8885 8965 / maizatul@perdana.org.my or maizatul.perdana@gmail.com)



UPCOMING PROGRAMMES & EVENTS

PLF AI & LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Date: 22-23 April
Venue: TBC

PLF-INSEAD SENIOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Date: August 2026
Venue: TBC

LIBRARY WORKSHOP: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CLASSIFICATION WORKSHOP

Date: 27-29 April 2026
Venue: Perdana Leadership Foundation

PLF MERDEKA EXHIBITION & DIALOGUE

Date: August – September 2026
Venue: Perdana Leadership Foundation

PLF BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Dates: April, September, November 2026
Venue: Facebook Live

PLF BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Date: October 2026
Venue: TBC

LIBRARY WORKSHOP: DEWEY-DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION WORKSHOP

Date: June 2026
Venue: Perdana Leadership Foundation

PERDANA DISCOURSE SERIES 26

Date: October 2026
Venue: Perdana Leadership Foundation

Other programmes will be announced via our social media, so be sure to follow us on FB, IG, and LinkedIn.



OUR RICH ONLINE RESOURCE

Our website <https://www.perdana.org.my> contains plenty of resources on Malaysia's Prime Ministers and their policies, including an interactive visual timeline, infographics, and podcasts.

Our Library's OPAC is also available for you to search our vast digital repository, all for free.

FOLLOW US

PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

Drawing on the past to serve the future

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