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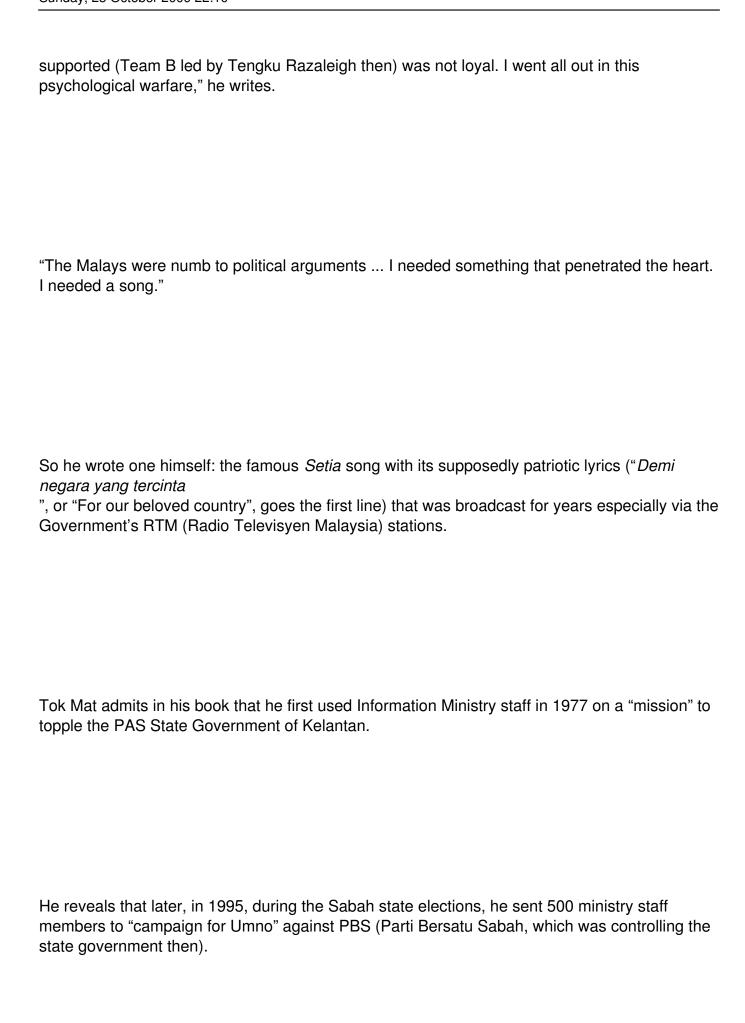
A former minister shares eyebrow-rising inside stories from his long political career.

UNLESS the name on the cover is Mahathir or Badawi, ministerial memoirs wouldn't usually be greeted with bated breath.

"I had to bring Malay loyalty back to Umno. And I had to raise a presumption that anybody who

The truth emerges

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"I was asked to bring PBS down. I shut the media off, there were no reports. People didn't know what the Sabah Government was doing, so it looked like they were doing nothing. It was a very dirty tactic," he now admits.
Tok Mat had his secondary school education at Johor Baru's English College before doing a Bachelor of Arts at Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta.
He tells me that he learnt the basics of propaganda when he was a script writer for Filem Negara (the National Film Board) in the mid 1960s. "There was no TV then, so that was the Government's only (way to generate) propaganda," he recalls.
He honed his innate musical ability there and picked up film editing skills too. He later went on to personally devise the melody and lyrics of various songs, including <i>Setia</i> , <i>Syukur</i> and <i>Sejaht era Malaysia</i> , that were used for his "nation-building" campaigns.
Tok Mat has always had a fondness for oldies by Nat King Cole and Bing Crosby, and once even made it to the quarter finals of Radio Singapore's talentime singing contest in the 1950s.

