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# Tun Fatimah

AN AZANIN AHMAD PRODUCTION  
PERFORMED BY



27th, 28th, 29th September 1996  
8.00 p.m.

AUDITORIUM DEWAN BANDARAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR

ALL PROCEEDS  
TO CHARITY



ORGANIZED BY SUASANA  
AZANIN AHMAD PRODUCTIONS  
MALAYSIAN LEGAL PRACTICE  
S.S. 101004

## Message

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the premiere of the dance drama "Tun Fatimah" organised and sponsored by the Sime Darby Group. The production which combines Malaysia's cultural and historical heritage is reflective of the Group's commitment to the preservation of local arts and culture.

"Tun Fatimah" is presented to the Malaysian audience by the Suasana Cultural Centre headed by the renowned dancer-choreographer, Azarin Ahmad. Suasana has long been a worthy cultural ambassador for this country having given many critically acclaimed performances in the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, Japan, Australia and Cambodia.

I am sure that this evening's performance will be of immense interest to all of us who value our country's rich cultural and historical traditions.

I am grateful to all those who have contributed to the success of this production.

To our audience tonight, I wish you all a very enjoyable evening.

**YABhg Tun Ismail bin Mohamed Ali**  
Chairman of Sime Darby Berhad



## Message from Azanin Ahmad

The real story of Tun Fatimah is beyond the evidence of history and literature. In the written annals, she is stereotyped as a helpless victim of circumstance who stood by her man under adverse conditions. The records merely portray her as beautiful, demure, subservient - a footnote in the annals of state matters. Occasionally, there is reference to her deeply religious convictions and warrior-like qualities but these facts are overshadowed by the dominant story line of state matters.

In wrestling with the story line of Tun Fatimah, I often had to confront myself in search of the artistic truth. The weight of history and literature formed layers and layers of material that veiled the untold story. It was at an unmarked grave at Pekan Tua, four hours downstream by motorised boat from Pekan Baru on the Kampar River, Sumatera, that something deep inside me began to question history. History has to be stripped of its power base and unmasked for reality to be seen. A grave injustice to the meaning of civilisation lay buried at Pekan Tua. The story had to be told.

The story of Tun Fatimah is the demystified story of the other half of History. Tun Fatimah was the Imperial centre of the Asiatic archipelago. It was she the Portugese hunted from Johor Lama to Pulau Bentan and finally to Kampar. The conquerors understood that she was the key to the continuity

of the Malaccan empire and not her husband, Sultan Mahmud I, the last Sultan of Malacca. Destroy her and the civilisation would be but a memory. This is Tun Fatimah who witnessed her husband, father and brother executed by order of Sultan Mahmud I who forced her to enter into marriage with him. This is Tun Fatimah whose ancestral bloodline came from the Bendaharas (Prime Ministers) of the Asiatic archipelago. True to her calling, she shouldered state matters that threatened a civilisation. She bore children who ensured the continuity of the civilisation - religion, custom, and language - beyond threat. It is Islam, Adat and Bahasa that continue to define the civilisation that makes the Asiatic archipelago.

The truth lies buried beyond the written history and literature, beyond the image of the subservient Oriental woman. Tun Fatimah survives and is celebrated in oral tradition by the people. Those who listen will learn. Those who seek will find. Those who sense will understand. I share this simple truth through this dance drama with you.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to Sime Darby Berhad who shared my vision and made it possible to stage this premiere performance of "Tun Fatimah"

Azanin Dato' Ahmad

Artistic Director of Suasana Cultural Centre