

Sri Perdana open to the public from Sunday

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PETALING JAYA: Malaysians will have a chance to experience for themselves how former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali lived at their Sri Perdana home when it becomes a public gallery on Sunday.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said *Galeria Sri Perdana*, where Dr Mahathir lived from 1983 until 1999 before moving to Putrajaya, would be preserved as the home of the country's fourth Prime Minister.

Formerly known as Sri Timah because the Malaysia Mining Corporation (MMC) owned it, the name was later changed to Sri Perdana.

The gallery showcases Dr

Mahathir's personal belongings, his carpentry works, a rocking chair and television set which Dr Mahathir bequeathed to the National Archives for this gallery.

"The public can view areas where major decisions were made and foreign dignitaries were received.

"The private quarters where Dr Mahathir slept, cooked and even carried out carpentry work would also be accessible," he said, adding that admission would be free for the time being.

Located at Jalan Terengganu, Damansara, the gallery sprawling over 1.86ha, is divided into two levels and the lower ground section.

Level one comprises the main lounge for official visits and family gatherings. Its walls boast of fine decorative Malay woodcarvings.

There is also a meeting room where a live telecast crossover for a general election decision had been held, a banquet kitchen, a theatre for private use, an exhibition hall, a hair trimming corner and the carpentry room.

Level two showcases Dr Mahathir's collection of hats, shoes, and walking sticks. This is also where the bedrooms and another exhibition hall are located.

The lower ground section houses the main kitchen and the laundry room.

Earlier, Kadir made a tour around the gallery, which would be officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today.

Visiting hours are between 10am and 5pm from Tuesday to Sunday and public holidays. The gallery will be closed on Monday.