

Still no time for memoirs

5 1 8 MAY 2004

Too many speaking engagements, says Dr M

BY MERGAWATI ZULFAKAR

PUTRAJAYA: Nearly eight months after stepping down as prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad still can't find time to write his memoirs.

His reason?

"Too many invitations to give speeches. If you give me a chance to sit down and write (I can) but people ask me to give speeches and I spend a lot of time speaking.

"A 20-minute speech actually takes me about a month to write. All of you can write your article very quickly, but I revise my speech many times," he told reporters at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here after receiving a book, *A Salute to a Man*, a compilation of Dr Mahathir's quotes from his speeches.

Before his retirement last October, Dr Mahathir had indicated that he would write his memoirs to record his experiences.

"I have started (on my memoirs) but as usual, I have discarded it and started all over again. I am not satisfied," he added.

Dr Mahathir has been delivering speeches at various international conferences including in Italy, Japan and China.

On another matter, he said Iran would be in chaos if the Americans left on June 30, the deadline for the coalition forces to leave Iraq.

"If they get out, there will be chaos. They can relinquish the command of the American forces. The US forces should stay there but should relinquish command to the United Nations. Whoever the UN appoints as the commanding officer, they must accept.

"They created this problem. I don't think they can accept it any other way. Now people are dying in Iraq, including Americans but most of them killed are Iraqis," he said.