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Foundation complex almost ready

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PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - The Perdana Leadership Foundation Complex, where former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will continue to share his thoughts with the world, is nearing completion at the lakeside in Precinct 7 here.

With only finishing touches to be carried out, the two-storey foundation complex's main facility is a state-of-the-art library.

The library's main focus will be for students, academics and the future generation in particular to study Dr Mahathir's thoughts, writings and speeches during his tenure in politics and in the Government.

A visit today to the lakeside facility, which enjoys a scenic view of the administrative capital, saw workers moving in Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali's personal belongings like paintings from Seri Perdana to the new complex.

Inside the facility, workers were busy with the final touches while a few staff of the foundation have started work.

Portraits of Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah hang majestically at the main entrance, lobby and the second floor of the complex, the official opening of which is expected to be announced soon.

The full operation of the Perdana Leadership Foundation is expected to commence on Dr Mahathir's return from overseas on Nov 15.

The contractor appointed to build the complex, it is understood, has handed over the facility to the foundation late last month.

The setting up of the foundation, dedicated to Dr Mahathir, was jointly mooted by a host of individuals and corporate bodies to "keep Dr Mahathir's thinking alive" after his retirement as the nation's fourth Prime Minister last month.

Dr Mahathir's ideas and thoughts are not only respected locally but are being sought by politicians, national leaders, academics and researchers worldwide.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir, who is on holiday in Spain, is expected to travel to Japan next week to deliver his maiden speech after retiring as Prime Minister.

He is scheduled to deliver a keynote address entitled "Democracy and Security in the Era of Globalisation" at the Global 2003 Forum in Okinawa, on Nov 11.

Organised by the Institute for International, Social and Economic Studies, Dr Mahathir will be joined by former Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev and former Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto.

Prior to his retirement and also during his last Press conference before stepping down, Dr Mahathir gave an assurance that he would continue to travel the world to speak his mind.

It is understood that to-date the former Prime Minister, who is regarded as the icon of developing nations and the mover in Southeast Asia, has received numerous invitations to do so from think-tanks and universities around the globe.