

06/09/2003

Gallery to showcase PM's life to open in December

MALACCA, Fri. - The Galeria Sri Perdana in Kuala Lumpur, which will showcase Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's contributions to the country as well as his personal belongings, is expected to be opened in December.

National Archives director-general Rahani Jamil said work on the gallery was between 90 and 95 per cent complete. It is located at the old official residence of the Prime Minister in Jalan Terengganu in Damansara.

"On display will be various exhibits, including the furniture used there, Dr Mahathir's carpentry skills and his contributions to the nation.

"We plan to open the gallery on Dr Mahathir's birthday in December," she said yesterday after State Education Committee chairman Datuk Long Said, representing Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, opened the "Historical Talk and Independence exhibition" at a hotel here.

She said they were planning to have Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who would assume the post of Prime Minister when Dr Mahathir retires next month, to open the gallery.

Rahani said the gallery would be a fitting tribute to Malaysia's fourth Prime Minister and his vast contributions to Malaysia.

She added that the National Archives had also built memorials for the three previous Prime Ministers - Tengku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Hussein Onn - that showcase their personal belongings and contributions to the country.

The gallery, Rahani said, would be in addition to Dr Mahathir's family home in Alor Star which has been turned into a memorial depicting his earlier life there.

A rocking chair and television set were some of the items that Dr Mahathir was persuaded to bequeath to the National Archives for this gallery.

Visitors will also be able to see his bedroom and a room of one of his children, the kitchen, the dining room, the rooms where he practised woodwork and his life in the pre-Putrajaya days.