

Mahathir's birthplace to be retained as national heritage

By RUBIAH RAHMAN

ALOR STAR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed's dilapidated birthplace at Lorong Kilang Ais here will be retained as a national heritage.

The National Archives has allocated \$500,000 to restore the 90-year-old wooden house to its original state.

National Archives director-general Datuk Zakiah Hanum said the home would be preserved as a national heritage and "monument of the future."

She said restoration work would be carried out meticulously to "retain the original look" during Dr Mahathir's childhood.

"We are giving priority towards preserving the originality of the home including the furniture and the study," she added during a recent visit to the home.

Also present were the Prime Minister's brother Mashahor, 68, and sisters Rafeah, 75, and Habshan, 72. About 100 well-wishers attended a *kenduri* and *tahlil* session.

It is learnt that several of Dr Mahathir's personal belongings and pictures will be exhibited in the home, which will be made a tourist attraction.

Muzeum Negara assistant director (monument division) Paiman Keromo, said wherever possible the home would be rebuilt using its own wood to capture the old setting.

Kedah Historical Society deputy president Haji Wan Shamsuddin Mohamed Yusoff said: "The home is rich in history. At one time, Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabuddin (Malacca Governor) used to live there with Dr Mahathir's family before the second World War," he added.