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PM to speak for Asia at OIC summit

Farush Khan in Doha, Qatar

A WARM welcome awaits Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when he arrives here today for the ninth summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference where he will speak for the Asian group.

The Prime Minister will be received on his arrival at the Doha International Airport at 11.15am by his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Abdallah bin Khalifa Al-Thani and introduced to dignitaries.

Malaysia's national anthem will be played after which Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Sheikh Abdallah, will inspect the guard of honour.

He will then proceed to a motorcade and leave for the official residence, Villa No 66, Doha Compound.

A pre-council meeting will be held at the villa at 5pm, to be attended by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, president of the International Islamic University Tan Sri Sanusi Junid, and other ministry officials.

Prof Dr Yusuf Qardawi, a well-known Islamic scholar, is scheduled to call on Dr Mahathir at the villa at 5.30pm.

At night, the Prime Minister will meet Muslim intellectuals and businessmen at the Diplomatic Club, to be followed by a question and answer session.

On Sunday morning, Dr Mahathir will attend the opening ceremony of the summit at the Sheraton conference centre where the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani will be installed as chairman of the ninth OIC summit.

Dr Mahathir will speak at 11.25 am on Sunday after the representatives of the Africa group and Arab group deliver their speeches.

The Prime Minister will then attend an official luncheon hosted by Sheikh Hamad at the Salwa Hall, Sheraton and return to the conference centre at 5.30pm.

At 8pm on Sunday, Dr Mahathir will join other Malaysians at a dinner hosted by the Ambassador of Malaysia concurrently accredited to Qatar, Ismail Mustapha, at the Diplomatic Club.

On the morning of Nov 13, the Prime Minister is expected to pay a courtesy call on Sheikh Hamad.

He is also scheduled to have bilateral meetings with the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazrbayev, Syrian President Bashar al-Asad, Palestine President Yasser Arafat and the Deputy Prime Minister and Commander of the National Guard of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

Dr Mahathir will leave for Brunei for the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei at 9pm on Monday.

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