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Mahathir starts week-long visit to Myanmar

YANGON: Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here yesterday for a week-long stay in Myanmar, two days ahead of a visit by a UN special envoy charged with brokering a dialogue between the military regime and its democratic opposition.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by a delegation of 30 officials, was welcomed at Yangon airport by Senior Gen Than Shwe, Myanmar's prime minister.

Dr Mahathir, who held talks with Gen Than, also met with representatives of the Malaysian community.

He is expected to depart today for a six-day private holiday off the country's southern coast, officials said.

Dr Mahathir last visited Myanmar in 1998.

Tomorrow, UN special envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail will begin a five-day visit to Myanmar, his third since his appointment in April, on a mission to broker dialogue between the regime and the NLD.

Razali, who was Malaysia's permanent representative to the United Nations, was able to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi twice during his last visit in October. — AP